

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD ON THURSDAY THE 15<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2022 AT 6.00 PM  
ZOOM

ACTION

Present : As per sederunt

Apologies : M Stavrou, E Barre, I Gilbert, L O'Connor, A Kainth, J Woodcock

Attending: P Swinton, B Hay, J Small, T McFerran

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1) Welcome, Apologies and Sederunt

E McCabe said another Council meeting would be organised for April.

2) Minute of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

Minutes of previous meeting approved.

No feedback received from Council members on spaces not open past 5pm for mature student study. To remain an open action point.

No feedback received from Council members on seeing unavailable rooms showing as available on UofG Life app. To remain an open action point.

E Simmons advised she will arrange a meeting with G Connor and R Vare soon to discuss incorporating the GBV module into the SRC website, as well as possibility of mandatory workshop attendance for clubs and societies office bearers.

S Malis said he has received updates from the GCC Councillor regarding student safety concerns raised on their walkthrough of the University Campus and local area. S Malis will contact her to establish what further progress can be made on these issues.

S Malis has not heard back from H Baer on the lighting issue she raised regarding the Vet School. If H Baer has any further concerns on this issue she should approach S Malis directly.

Open action for Council members to alert M Clarke of spaces not open past 5pm for mature student study.

Open action for Council members to alert Sabbs if they see unavailable rooms showing as available on UoG Life app.

E Simmons to discuss incorporating GBV module into SRC website with G Connor and R Vare, as well as possibility of mandatory workshop attendance for C&S office bearers.

S Malis to contact GCC councillor regarding

E McCabe will follow up with G Connor regarding a shared mailbox for 1<sup>st</sup> Year representatives/General Representatives.

progress on student safety concerns.

E McCabe spoke to L O'Connor regarding the submission of a budget proposal for a Class Representative Ball. L O'Connor wishes to hold a further discussion with E McCabe regarding the possibility of holding the event this year. The matter will then be raised by L O'Connor for discussion at the next Council meeting in April.

H Baer to follow up with S Mailis regarding Vet School lighting issue.

E McCabe to contact G Connor, re. 1<sup>st</sup> Year/Gen Rep shared mailbox.

E McCabe raised P Su's room booking suggestion at the Digital Experience Board meeting (that all the rooms available during a specific time period could be shown and then a room could be booked from those showing as available). The University did not guarantee that they would integrate this but said they are looking at developing the room booking system and are aware of the current issues with it.

L O'Connor to speak to E McCabe regarding class rep ball and raise at April Council meeting.

E McCabe said social activities for students in Paisley/outwith Glasgow-based halls should be integrated into the SRC's range of Welcome Events so such students feel included in planned social activities. She asked S Malis, E Simmons and T Anderson to consider plans for such events.

S Malis, E Simmons and T Anderson to consider integrating social plans for students in Paisley/outwith Glasgow into SRC Welcome events.

E Simmons suggested an activity could be planned for Paisley-based students as part of the SRC's upcoming De-Stress campaign.

Consider possible De-Stress activity for these students.

Council members are encouraged to continue to push for adequate exam time on a local level if student feedback suggests this is an issue. This is to remain an open action for Council members.

Open action for Council members to push for adequate exam time on a local level if student feedback suggests this has been an issue.

M Clarke followed up with H Pentleton regarding course codes in relation to an issue she raised whereby students have no option to join online classes if their subject is seminar-based only.

M Clarke asked E Lindquist to email her regarding her attempts to ask for small group teaching to be recorded, so that she could take the issue forward if necessary.

E McCabe said any wider issues relating to this matter could be brought back to Council for discussion.

The next Academic Forum will take place on March 22<sup>nd</sup>. M Clarke will raise hybrid teaching and the class rep issues previously raised at Council

M Clarke to raise hybrid teaching and class rep issues

as points on the agenda for discussion. Formalised feedback will be recorded and subsequently discussed at the next Council meeting in April.

at Academic Forum for further discussion. Formalised feedback to be recorded and discussed at April Council meeting.

M Clarke followed up with the Business School regarding a notification being sent to students on timetabling errors. She said she believes the School sent this out and that they did not receive many responses saying it was still an issue.

E McCabe raised student confusion over the University's Covid guidelines as an issue with the University. The University stated that their current messaging is increasingly focused on the upcoming change to restrictions due to take place on March 21<sup>st</sup>, as mandatory face-mask use will be removed from that point onwards. As such, the University is looking at the implications of this for classrooms and study spaces.

D Henderson said the planned change on March 21<sup>st</sup> has been postponed by approximately two weeks.

E McCabe raised, with Accommodation Services, the fact that many students are unaware of the existence of their UofG Living site. They advised they would promote the site more heavily next year when students are arriving in halls and signpost it as their main channel of communication. E McCabe said Council members should inform her if they feel there are any issues with Accommodation Services' communications.

Open action for Council members to alert Sabbs if they notice gaps in Accommodation Services comms.

S Malis is looking into ways of gathering feedback from students who have had negative experiences with private accommodation/HMOs. He will then pass this feedback on to the Hillhead Community Council.

S Malis to gather feedback from students with negative experiences of private accommodation/HMOs and pass to HHCC stakeholders. S Malis to also keep TAC updated with work on this.

E McCabe asked S Malis to keep The Advice Centre updated with this work.

E Simmons said there was no update to provide regarding a vote being taken on the adoption of the Jerusalem declaration or the declaration being passed by the EDSC.

E Simmons said the strike action prevented her from meeting with the Disability Service to discuss the information raised by H Pentleton regarding students not registering with DS because of its strict registering

E Simmons to bring up information raised by H Pentleton at

process (in terms of diagnoses). She said will provide an update on this at the next Council meeting.

catch-up meeting with DS.

M Clarke said she would follow up with J McKay for course code information in relation to his enquiry about moving in-person exams online.

M Clarke contacted the University regarding the need for students to receive exam information in a timely fashion. She said she has not yet received a response.

M Clarke to continue pushing for Uni to send exam info to students in timely fashion.

E McCabe said, in relation to the following action point from the previous meeting, that the Sabbatical team raised this matter with Senate and that she will speak on this during this meeting's UCU agenda point –

*E McCabe to ask University to provide clearer comms to students on what they are going to be assessed on and any penalties that can be expected for missing classes due to strike solidarity.*

E McCabe said she would update on the progress of the SEC strategy draft during her oral Council report and said Council members could expect an invitation to a consultation on this in the coming weeks.

M Mojsiej said he is awaiting information on the methodology used for the mental health research he referenced at the previous Council meeting. Once received he will pass this to B Hay.

M Mojsiej to pass PBSA mental health research methodology to B Hay once received.

E McCabe raised, with Accommodation Services, the matter of mental health support for students taking up the University's newly secured additional bedspaces. The service advised that they plan to integrate the Living Support model into the nomination-agreed spaces. E McCabe said the SRC would monitor this process.

Sabbs to ensure SRC monitors support given to students in newly secured bedspaces.

E McCabe spoke to the University regarding including housing support as an eligible area of the Hardship Fund. She communicated that there needs to be a clearer breakdown provided to students on what the Hardship Fund will cover next year. She said the Hardship Fund will need adapted to cover pressing financial issues which students may experience and that the SRC should push for this for next year. She said the SRC has begun these conversations with the University and that this can remain an open action point.

Sabbs - SRC (and next year's Council) to continue conversations with the University regarding adapting Uni Hardship fund to deal with student finance issues including housing.

E Simmons contacted T Meadows to ensure all the Good Cause and extensions information the latter spoke on at the previous Council meeting was correct. She said the information recorded in the minutes of the previous meeting is an accurate record and that this information applies to extension requests of up to 5 days.

Sabbs to ensure students are aware of what hardship fund covers for next year.

T Meadows said her next L&T meeting will take place tomorrow and she will raise the suggestion of personal responses from staff to students submitting 5-day extension requests as a matter for discussion. She said she will also seek feedback on whether the new system has helped with midterm extensions. T Meadows said she would follow up with E Simmons with an update on this after her L&T meeting.

H Pentleton forwarded the automated response she received regarding extensions on to T Meadows for her info.

E McCabe said any continuing feedback that Council members receive from students regarding Good Cause should be passed to E Simmons as she sits on the Student Support Officer Implementation Group.

Open action for Council members to pass any feedback from students on Good Cause to E Simmons for her to raise at Student Support Officer Implementation Group.

E McCabe said the SRC will issue another communication on its GBV module to students in due course.

E McCabe spoke to Information Services regarding reports of unstable University Wi-Fi. She said any Wi-Fi issues should be reported via the UofG Helpdesk. E McCabe added that Susan Ashworth will write part of the University's next newsletter to address connectivity concerns and detail what is being done to improve connectivity around campus. She said there are also plans to improve Visitor Wi-Fi access in the coming months.

E McCabe -SRC to issue comms on GBV module alongside University.

### 3) Learning and Teaching Update

M Clarke has been involved in the planning of the Learning and Teaching Principles for 2022/23. She expressed to the University that she would like to see an increase in active learning, as well as Covid-19 safety measures being reduced as much as possible whilst maintaining adequately ventilated teaching spaces. M Clarke provided the following overview of plans as outlined in the Teaching and Planning Principles document:

- The upper limit of 150 no longer applies.
- 2-2 monitoring will continue. Ventilation assessments of clean air in teaching spaces will be carried out.
- Lecturers will have the option to deliver lectures online but they will not be required to do so. Teaching will mirror the working from home practices that have arisen due to the pandemic and will include online and in-person teaching. This will be designed to prepare students for the working practices they will experience once they graduate and gain employment.
- Lecture capacity will be at 80%, due to ventilation reasons.

M Clarke said she believed the document would be published in due course. She said the document outlines the University's new approach of online asynchronous structured learning, wherein students will receive a lecture, a seminar, a tutorial and a 1hr teaching slot online as potential options.

M Clarke advised that, following discussion of potentially moving the dates of semester 2, the University has decided not to do this.

K Craig asked if there will be any regulations in place with regards to the reuse of lecture material for staff who choose to conduct their lectures online.

M Clarke said she does not believe there is. She said she would speak to University staff to ask if regulations could be included to ensure that, where teaching is delivered online, the materials are of a high quality.

K Craig asked if it could be ensured that teaching materials only include up-to-date information.

E Simmons asked if there has been any consultation on accessibility with regards to plans.

M Clarke said she raised this matter last week and communicated to the University that she does not wish for the SRC to have to re-campaign for the Lecture Recording policy to be implemented. She said the policy should continue to be implemented to make teaching accessible. She

M Clarke to speak to Uni and ask if regulations can be implemented to ensure online teaching only includes high quality, current and up-to-date teaching material.

M Clarke to raise accessibility in future discussions regarding the University's

added that there has already been considerable consultation on accessibility with regards to plans but that she will continue to raise the subject of accessibility in further discussions.

learning and teaching plans.

M Clarke said the Exam Sustainability group is currently holding a consultation with senior members of academic staff and L&T coordinators in each subject regarding their ideas for the future of exams at the University. M Clarke said she has been advocating for a shift away from exams where another form of assessment would suffice. She acknowledged that some subjects will still require exams, however.

H Krogsaeter asked if the unsustainable growth of student numbers will be discussed by the group.

M Clarke said the University has confirmed that it will not increase its student numbers for the next academic year.

E McCabe said, while this has been decided, the University has communicated that it will use next year to prepare for the growth in student numbers it has planned for the following year. She said it is important that the SRC ensures that unsustainable student population growth continues to be challenged in discussions with the University.

Sabbs to ensure that unsustainable student population growth is challenged in discussions with University.

K Craig said that student numbers are being increased by hundreds in the School of Medicine. She said this will make clinical placements very difficult.

K Craig to email E McCabe with info on increasing student numbers in her School.

E McCabe asked K Craig to email her with this information.

D Henderson said the University's student numbers are currently slightly inflated due to reasons stemming from the pandemic.

M Franz said she feels the student numbers at the University are already too high. She said there was discussion within the SPS L&T meeting regarding Hunter Halls no longer being used as a lecture theatre. She asked if more information could be provided on this proposal and how students could still receive adequate teaching with reduced lecture theatre numbers.

M Clarke said she was not aware of such plans. She said that, under new plans, staff will only have access to large lecture theatres if they can demonstrate that they are using active learning techniques.

M Franz said discussion in SPS suggested that large lecture theatres would be utilised next year, however, 'overflow halls' would be in place where students would watch the lecture digitally via a screen.

M Clarke said she was not aware of this and asked M Franz to send her a paper trail so she could look into the matter further.

E McCabe asked M Clarke to follow up on this matter with M Franz.

D Henderson said that space issues may hopefully be mitigated by online lectures, however, he expressed concern that, as 2 years of non-standard teaching have elapsed since the Lecture Recording Policy's implementation, the policy may have been forgotten about. He suggested that Council members next year monitor this issue and ensure that lectures in large theatres are being recorded.

E McCabe emphasised that the Lecture Recording Policy is a University policy and, as such, should be implemented. She added that the SRC has raised the issue of high student numbers with the University before. She said that local level feedback from Council members describing areas where there are still issues is helpful for addressing the issue with the University. E McCabe encouraged Council members to bring such feedback to the Sabbatical Officers.

E Simmons suggested that the Sabbatical Officers could issue a survey to Council members before the next meeting to collect feedback on how high student numbers are negatively affecting areas of the student experience. She said this would inform long-term work which the Sabbs would carry out over the summer.

T Anderson said he is concerned that confidentiality regarding exam arrangements is allowing the University to withhold important information from students who are paying significant sums to study at Glasgow University. He said students' learning and teaching have already been disadvantaged by the impact of Covid-19 and strike action. He asked what the SRC could do in this situation to best support students.

M Franz to send M Clarke paper trail of info on Hunter Halls no longer being used as a lecture theatre and implementation of 'overflow halls, so M Clarke can look into matter and update M Franz.

Open action for Council members to bring local-level feedback on issues stemming from high student numbers to Sabbatical Officers for raising with Uni.

E Simmons/Sabbatical Officers to issue survey to Council members collecting feedback on the detrimental impact of high student numbers of the student experience, to inform long-term Sabb work.



M Clarke said she understands this frustration but said the SRC is bound by confidentiality on certain issues regarding exams at the University.

E McCabe said she believes all are entitled to know what the Exam Sustainability Group stands for and what it is working on. She said that she believes the reason the University did not want the information shared is due to the fact it relates to actual operations and strategically looking at the space available for exams. She said, as such, the information is not something that necessarily needs communicated to students as it may cause unnecessary alarm over an exam-related issue which the Exam Sustainability group was set up to solve.

E McCabe said if Council members have any continuing concerns regarding plans for the next exam diet, they should bring these to M Clarke or herself.

#### 4) UCU Update

M Clarke has been in contact with the UCU regarding a potential marking boycott. She is due to meet with them on 24/03/2022 to discuss the matter. M Clarke said she could not confirm whether the boycott would take place or not, as the UCU are still to discuss the matter with University management, however she said she does not believe this will happen and that staff have communicated to her that this would be a last resort. She added that such decisions are made on a branch-by-branch basis.

T Meadows said students are not aware of the different levels of action short of a strike and are worried that the marking of their work is being pushed back. She said the SRC should consider communicating to students that staff are engaging in action short of a strike but that this does not include a marking boycott, and that any delays in marking have not been through staff choice but as a result of strike action.

E McCabe said this issue was discussed at Senior Leaders Forum in the previous week. She said the University has been largely silent on the issue due to the backlash it received from its last email to students and the desire not to cause a public conflict with the UCU. E McCabe communicated that this was unacceptable as it is the University's responsibility, first and foremost, to keep students informed and reassured. E McCabe said the SRC would continue to push for the

Open action for Council members with continuing concerns regarding plans for next exam diet to bring these to M Clarke or E McCabe.

Sabbs to ensure that SRC pushes for Uni to keep students informed and reassured on current action and its effects on students.

University to take such action. She said the University is going to focus on communications to students explaining what is happening currently, how discussions are progressing and the likely impact of action on students. She said the SRC should ensure that it has sight of these communications and they include the clarifications and reassurances that students require on the matter.

D Henderson asked for an update to be provided to Council after M Clarke meets with the UCU.

D Henderson said part of the issue stems from the fact that the awarding of degrees at the University requires the certification of external examiners. He said he is concerned that external staff may engage in a marking boycott and this may have a negative knock-on effect on Glasgow University students' degree awards.

D Henderson said the SRC and University should devote time to formulating a contingency plan in the event of a marking boycott. He said such a plan should prioritise the graduation of Senior Honours students and Masters students before dealing with the remainder of the backlog.

E McCabe said Council members will receive an update following the SRC's discussions with the UCU.

E McCabe said the SRC has spoken with the Senate Office regarding a contingency plan in the event of a marking boycott. She said Jill Morrison provided assurance that the University is committed to ensuring that students progress and graduate, and that students due to graduate soon will be prioritised. She said the SRC must monitor this situation and hold the University to these commitments, as well as ensure that the University communicates its plans to students.

M Clarke said Jill Morrison communicated that external examining is unlikely to impact the timing of degree/exam results. She added that there may be further strike action in the future.

T Anderson said a joint statement from the University and UCU regarding a marking boycott could allay student concern over the matter.

T Anderson said he is concerned about the mental wellbeing of students with regards to the effects of a marking boycott.

E  
McCabe/Sabbs  
to ensure SRC  
has sight of Uni  
comms on UCU  
action and  
ensure they  
include  
necessary  
clarifications  
and  
reassurances.

E  
McCabe/Sabbat  
ical Officers to  
ensure Council  
members  
receive update  
on discussions  
with the UCU.

E  
McCabe/Sabbs -  
SRC to monitor  
the situation of  
potential  
marking boycott  
and ensure  
University is  
held to account  
on its  
commitments,  
as well as make  
sure Uni plans  
are  
communicated  
to students.

T Anderson said he understands the prioritisation of Senior Honours/Masters students for graduation but expressed concern over the wellbeing of 1<sup>st</sup> Year students in the event of late results caused by a marking boycott. He said it would be good to have more information on what the worst-case scenario for late results would look like.

M Clarke said she could ask for clarity on this at the Senate catch-up meeting. She said Senior Honours/Masters students would be given priority due to employment/postgraduate study requirements.

E McCabe said if a marking boycott looks likely to happen then the SRC can ask the University for further reassurances/clarity on expected timelines for results.

M Mojsiej said he feels it is important that the SRC takes a vote each time future strike action is announced, on whether it will support the action. He asked for reassurance that this would happen.

E McCabe said she does not believe a vote on the current round of strike action is necessary, given that Council members' last discussion of the action indicated broad support. She said the SRC may reassess its position in the event of a marking boycott or something additional to the strike action. E McCabe said she is happy to re-visit discussion on the matter if Council members feel that their voice has not been heard on the issue, or that the SRC's stance no longer represents their viewpoint.

D Henderson said he believes Council should be consulted on such matters but acknowledged the difficulty of further discussion as the impact of action short of a strike has not yet been keenly felt. He said further discussion would depend on staff plans, with regards to action short of a strike, and that a degree of consultation on the issue would be beneficial. He suggested this could take the form of a consultation meeting or opportunity for Council members to provide email feedback.

E McCabe said she would be keen to avoid the lengthy process of a formal vote and consultation on the subject, due to the significant time-demand this placed on Council beforehand. She said, however, she would be happy to hear of any Council members' concerns on the matter at this meeting or initiate a discussion via a Council Facebook post. She added that a separate discussion on the matter prior to the next Council

M Clarke to seek clarity at Senate Catch-Up on worst-case scenario for late results due to UCU action.

E McCabe/Sabbs - SRC to ask Uni for further reassurances/clarity on expected results timelines if marking boycott looks likely.

E McCabe to consider holding separate discussion on SRC support of UCU action, before April Council meeting, depending on

meeting could possibly be held, depending on the outcome of upcoming discussions with the UCU.

outcome of  
UCU  
discussions.

T Anderson said, while he personally supports the strike action, he believes that support of the strikes among 1<sup>st</sup> Year students is reducing somewhat, and that students are beginning to voice their objections to the strikes.

K Craig said the SRC is here to represent students and that most students are still in favour of the strikes. She referenced previous assurances from Jill Morrison that a marking boycott would be a last resort and that a contingency plan to minimise disruption to students is in place. She asked if the SRC could communicate to students that it still supports the strikes but does not necessarily agree with students being unable to progress due to reduced numbers of marking staff.

M Clarke said if a marking boycott is implemented or the situation substantially alters, then a further consultation on the issue should be held. She said, as current action is another round of strikes, this falls under what the SRC previously agreed to support so its position should remain unchanged.

E McCabe said that in its statement, the SRC vocalised that, while its stance may not represent the viewpoints of all students on the matter, its stance does reflect the considered opinions of many elected student representatives.

T Anderson said the SRC should continue to support the strikes but acknowledge that there are students who do not support them.

E McCabe said T Anderson's point was noted. She said the SRC has tried to communicate this to the University in discussions. She said the matter could be discussed further in the future as the situation progresses. She said, as the strike action only affects certain cohorts of students, this may be a reason that some students are not fully informed on the strikes.

E McCabe to  
consider subject  
of SRC's support  
of the strikes  
possibly  
undergoing  
renewed  
discussion as  
the situation  
progress.

E Simmons said she was asked by students if the SRC would support lobbying the University to issue fee rebates to non-Scottish students whose learning was impacted by the strikes. She asked if Council members would support this idea or if they had any other ideas for concessions that the University could offer to students.

D Henderson said the SRC could possibly explore campaigning on this issue if the current situation deteriorates. He said that he would be concerned that the University offering financial incentives/concessions to students in response to the strike action may appear tokenistic but also reasoned that some financial support would be better than no support.

E McCabe said it may be worth revisiting the issue raised by E Simmons once the full scale of the situation has been ascertained. She noted, however, that the SRC's campaigning last year for the Russell Group to offer fee rebates/cap future fees for international students was unsuccessful. She said the SRC could campaign again if student feedback suggests it should but, that it should think creatively about what it should campaign for and ensure it is campaigning for an achievable goal. She said further discussion on this issue, if Council members still feel it is relevant, could take place at the next Council meeting.

Action for E McCabe/E Simmons - further discussion of possible SRC campaign for fee rebates/compensation for non-Scottish students whose learning has been impacted by the strikes, to take place at April Council meeting, if members feel it is relevant.

#### 5) Welfare update

E Simmons said International Women's Week 2022 involved a successful SRC-organised trip to Glasgow Women's Library.

E Simmons said work on the SRC's Invisible Disability Guide is ongoing. The hope is to hold focus groups during term-time with students to gather feedback on issues they have struggled with most.

E Simmons said no major issues have presented themselves with regards to student welfare, however, with Covid restrictions easing, some students have experienced feeling overwhelmed/unsafe coming onto campus. She said she will be working to try and support these students.

E Simmons said, going forward, a focus of the Retention and Success Sub-group will be mature students, as data suggests this cohort has struggled in this area.

R Vare asked for an update on the Dear Safe Place campaign as SWAG contacted her about this.

R Vare said when the SRC's GBV module is opened at first, students receive a notification saying they have completed the module. She asked

if this would affect the accuracy of the number of students showing as having completed the module.

E McCabe said the SRC is aware of the issue with the GBV module and that it raised it with Rape Crisis. Rape Crisis said they would work to address the issue in the next update of the module.

E McCabe said the hope is to launch the Dear Safe Place campaign before summer 2022. She said E Simmons would provide an update on this at the next Welfare Forum.

E Simmons to provide update on progress of Dear Safe Place campaign at next Welfare Forum.

## 6) Increased Cost of Living

At the last meeting of University Court E McCabe and D Henderson were asked to bring the issue of the increased cost of living to Council members for their feedback. She said Council members will be aware of the increased price of energy, as well as the Scottish Government's exclusion of students from its cost of living bursary scheme. She asked for Council's feedback on the matter and said any issues could be raised by Sabbatical Officers with the University.

E Simmons said students are a marginalised group in terms of income. She said the Principal has organised a meeting between the SRC and a local councilor who is working on these issues, with the plan being to address the cost of living for students and the disadvantage they face as a result of being excluded from Government's bursary scheme.

E Simmons said the lack of housing available for students, as well as the lack of legal protection for students renting properties who wish to leave their accommodation (or are experiencing poor living conditions), are issues which the Sabbatical Officers wish to gain feedback on, with a view to campaigning for solutions.

D Henderson said SAAS funding has not increased significantly in the previous 5 years, while the cost of living has risen. He said it is within the Scottish Government's power to increase SAAS funding for Scottish students, noting that the maximum SAAS loan is below the lowest student loan offered in England. D Henderson suggested collaborating with the other student representative bodies in Scotland and speaking to the Government's Higher Education Minister with a view to campaigning for increased funding for Scottish students.

D Henderson suggested the SRC could also lobby the University for the introduction of a bursary scheme for low-income Scottish students, akin to the schemes already in place at Edinburgh and St. Andrews universities. He said such a scheme would encourage Scottish students to attend Glasgow University and provide financial support to students where needed.

K Craig asked how a bursary scheme would work for students who are not financially independent of their parents but do not necessarily receive parental financial assistance.

D Henderson suggested a University fund be set up for low-income students (distinct from the Hardship Fund) which could provide financial support over and above the bursary scheme suggested.

E Simmons said the Hardship Fund is no longer available to non-EU/international students. As such, all other students experiencing financial hardship are directed to the University's discretionary fund which means there is no fund in place for non-EU/international students in financial crisis.

T Anderson said he contacted a Scottish Government minister recently regarding desired changes to the Care Experienced Bursary and received a dispiriting reply advising that students should apply to the Hardship Fund. He said he would like to see an increase to, and guarantee of, the Care Experienced Bursary, but noted that the University does offer a £1500 bursary for estranged students, with this being higher than what other universities provide. T Anderson added, however, that he would like to see this support increased.

T Anderson posited that a potential solution to the financial pressures facing students would be a guarantee from the University not to raise the rent prices of its student accommodation. He also suggested the SRC hold classes on budgeting for students. Furthermore, he suggested a community fridge could be implemented on campus, akin to the one in place at Edinburgh University.

E Simmons asked D Henderson to send her the information he referenced regarding bursaries offered by other Scottish universities.

E Simmons to explore reinstatement of Library community fridge.

E Simmons to speak to TAC on possibility of budgeting classes, an advisory doc for student budgeting or organising live Q&A on budgeting

E McCabe said she has already spoken to Accommodation Services regarding University accommodation rent increases, as it has been confirmed that rent prices will be increased next year. She said that she and The Advice Centre tried to ascertain whether student loans would be increased in line with the increase in rent costs, however, it looks like loan increases will unfortunately be minimal. E McCabe said the SRC tried to secure a price-freeze on rent, however, the University argued that its increase in rent is reflective of rising energy costs and the need for its pricing to remain competitive in the housing market. E McCabe said she will continue to monitor this situation.

advice for students.

D Henderson to send information on other university bursary schemes to E Simmons.

E McCabe to monitor situation of rising rent costs of Uni accommodation .

T Anderson said he understood the points raised by E McCabe but said the rent price of halls such as Murano was already too high before further increases were agreed. He said rent increases would have a sizeable impact on vulnerable student groups. He suggested a consultation take place with the University to ascertain what rent increases would be affordable to students.

E Simmons suggested the SRC could push for no further/minimal rent increases to the University's student accommodation but also campaign for the protected groups referenced by T Anderson to be supported in the event of increased rent prices.

E McCabe said this discussion could continue outwith the Council meeting and that the SRC should ascertain whether funding bodies are planning any increases for the next year. She said the SRC has been communicating to the University that, going forward, there will be an increasing number of students experiencing financial hardship due to housing costs. She said the SRC suggested specific housing bursaries be implemented, however, the University expressed a keenness to keep all funding within the same pot as they said they anticipate a variety of financial issues to be brought forward by students. She said it is important that the SRC ensure the University communicates to students that it is increasing its funding in the anticipation of students requiring assistance. She said it is also imperative that students are clearly signposted to such funds. She said the SRC will keep working on this but that Council members who have specific feedback to offer, or examples they wish to raise (particularly from a Widening Participation background), should pass this information to the Sabbatical Officers so it can be raised with the University.

Action for E Simmons/T Anderson - Discussion on rent-freezes/support for protected groups to continue offline.

E McCabe -SRC to ascertain whether funding bodies are planning any increases for next year.

E McCabe - SRC to ensure that the Uni communicates to students that it is putting more funding into its funds in the anticipation



H Krogsaeter said an increasing number of students are now working full-time. She said she believes this is due to the increased cost of living and the online accessibility of learning and teaching. She said almost all students in her School who are failing their courses or receiving poor grades are working full-time jobs. She asked if this was the case in any other Schools.

of increased student need.

Open action for Council members with feedback on detrimental effect of increased housing costs to pass this to Sabbs who will raise with Uni.

M Clarke said this has been a longstanding issue. She said full-time work has a detrimental impact on students' learning and teaching, as well as resulting in a reduced student experience, as working students do not have the time to participate in extracurricular activities. She suggested that she and E McCabe speak to Senate regarding this issue.

M Clarke and E McCabe to raise, with Senate, issue of detrimental impact of full-time work on students' success.

K Craig said this is a major issue in the School of Medicine, where almost half of students who did not pass Year 3 were working full-time jobs. She said the issue has been attributed to Covid-19 rather than working, but that this inaccurate.

E Simmons to raise issue of detrimental impact of working on student success at next Retention and Success Subgroup meeting.

E Simmons said she would raise the issue at the next Retention and Success Subgroup meeting. She said that working is not currently considered a protected characteristic or accepted as a reason for a Good Cause claim. E Simmons said she feels strongly that it should be considered as such.

E McCabe said any Council members with lived experience or examples of the negative effect of working on student learning should pass these to E Simmons so that they can be raised at the next Retention and Success Subgroup meeting.

Open action for Council members with feedback on detrimental impact of working on learning to pass feedback to E Simmons for raising at R&SS meeting.

## 7) Ukraine Invasion

The SRC issued a statement of solidarity with the University's Ukrainian students and staff in light of the recent Russian invasion of Ukraine. Since then, the SRC has been working with cross-city institutions in Glasgow on its humanitarian response to the invasion. In the first week of the invasion, the SRC promoted the humanitarian work of its affiliated clubs and societies.

E Simmons said that, during the second week of the invasion, the SRC held a donation drive which students can still donate to. A vigil was also

held at the University Chaplaincy and another is planned for Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> March.

E Simmons said the University Principal welcomed SRC support/input for an open letter to be sent by the University to the Scottish Government, explaining that universities want the Scottish Government to welcome a greater number of Ukrainian refugees to Scotland and that visas should be fast-tracked. E Simmons asked if Council would support this idea, noting that she felt, if the SRC were to be involved in the letter, the letter should make it clear that humanitarian assistance for all refugees is being advocated for.

E McCabe advised that the University should lead on the letter, as she feels it would have more impact on the Government if it came from the University. She said the Principal seemed amenable to this, if the SRC confirmed this was what it wanted.

D Henderson asked if the letter could come from the University but be countersigned by the SRC President, on behalf of the SRC.

E McCabe clarified that either countersigning the letter or showing SRC endorsement for it would be the intention. E McCabe asked if Council members were in support of this course of action.

S Malis noted the importance of recognising other conflicts across the world. He said the SRC communicated this in its statement on the Ukraine invasion and said it should continue to echo this sentiment in any of its future work.

C Thornton suggested that the SRC lobby the University to sponsor Ukrainian students so their degrees and accommodation are paid for by the University. She said other universities in the UK are already doing this.

E McCabe said there has been discussion on this within the International Strategy and Delivery board. She said the University are looking at offering asylum seeker status to incoming Ukrainian students, with this essentially defaulting them to the status of home students. She added that part of this offer would ensure that the students would be allocated accommodation as well. She said the University is also looking at how it can offer financial aid packages to incoming students and the potential of scholarships which could expand this initiative. She said the University

Sabbs to continue to echo support for those affected by all conflicts across the world in any future humanitarian work.

Open action for Council members with ideas for further action University can take to support those affected by Ukraine invasion, to pass these ideas

is also considering offering accommodation to non-student asylum seekers, however, it wishes to prioritise accommodation for its incoming students before exploring this possibility further. E McCabe said these discussions are ongoing and that Council members could contact her with additional ideas for University support.

to E McCabe for raising with Uni.

T Anderson said he felt the University's response regarding the situation in Ukraine has been poor and noted his dissatisfaction regarding recent University communications on cheating in exams. He said he would be concerned about the SRC attaching itself to a letter, the content of which could damage its ability to engage effectively with students.

E McCabe clarified that the letter the SRC would co-sign with the University would specifically address the need for greater humanitarian assistance from the Scottish Government with regards to the Ukraine invasion, and would not be related to any internal University processes. E McCabe said, were the SRC to co-sign the letter, it would have input on its content.

E McCabe said, after receiving a letter from the Russian Rectors' Association, the University has made the decision to suspend ties with Russian HEOs.

C Thornton said there needs to be University recognition of the Ukrainian students who are already studying at the University and provisions made for their welfare and grading.

E McCabe said the University is aware of all students currently studying at the University who are from areas affected by the conflict. She said the University has a group chat with these students, involving the International Student Support Team, to ensure these students are being supported. She said she believes all students on placements and those studying abroad have made it safely back to the UK. E McCabe said any Council members with concerns over the wellbeing of such students should let the Sabbatical Officers know.

Open action for Council members with concerns over wellbeing of students affected by Ukraine invasion to let Sabbs know.

E Simmons said, while the University is cutting ties with some Russian companies, it is still investing in armament companies whose stocks have risen due to the Ukraine invasion. She noted that a campaign for the University to divest from the arms trade has been ongoing for some time

without notable success and asked if the SRC would be willing to re-campaign for this action.

E McCabe said the SRC could campaign on this again, but the project would require Sabbatical Officer leadership.

E Simmons said she would investigate and explore the issue further.

H Pentleton and M Mojsiej indicated they would be willing to assist E Simmons with this project.

E Simmons to investigate and explore SRC re-campaigning for Uni arms divestment. H Pentleton and M Mojsiej to assist.

## 8) Council Reports

### a) SRC President: Ella McCabe

The Student Experience Committee Strategy draft was brought to the SEC last week for feedback. The draft strategy will be circulated to Council members and a Council consultation session will be organised to take place within the next few weeks.

E McCabe to circulate draft SEC strategy to Council and organise consultation session.

E McCabe referred to the University's Covid safety plans for the upcoming relaxation of restrictions. She said study spaces and L&T spaces will be operated at 80% capacity to ease student anxiety over using these spaces. E McCabe said the SRC are trying to keep an open dialogue with the University regarding study space capacities for the future as there is a desire from the latter to return these spaces to full capacity. The SRC is cognisant, however, of student/staff anxiety over this prospect. E McCabe said the University is apprehensive regarding the implementation of 2m physical distancing in study spaces, due to space shortages, however, it has said that Covid-19 safety signage will remain in place and some of the screens between booths will remain in place. E McCabe said the SRC will need to work with the University and its Communications department when these changes are implemented to ensure that all provisions are being made and that students feel safe and supported. She said the SRC can request further communications on respectful behaviour and mask-wearing if necessary.

Sabbs to keep open dialogue with University regarding study space capacities for the future.

Sabbs to work with Uni Comms department when Covid safety changes are implemented to ensure provisions are made and students feel safe.

E McCabe/Sabbs - SRC to request further comms on respectful behaviour and mask wearing if necessary.

E McCabe met with the Home Student Working Group to discuss progressing the group's report. She referenced the work undertaken by former VPSA Amy McKenzie Smith regarding home students and said A McKenzie Smith has written a report with recommendations for provision. Once finalised, the group's action list will be presented at the

next SEC meeting, with the hope it will be finalised as an appendix to the action plans which currently exist. E McCabe said she would be happy to pass the report/action list to any interested Council members.

E McCabe congratulated all Council members who ran in the recent SRC Spring election.

b) VP Education: Mia Clarke

T Anderson asked about the extent of the University's involvement in CIVIS.

E McCabe said most CIVIS work is delegated to External Relations' Rachel Sandison but the University does have a designated CIVIS representative.

T Anderson said there seems to be a lack of communication between the University staff team working on CIVIS and CIVIS student council representatives. He said both groups need to be in contact and working together.

H Krogsaeter asked if a CIVIS meeting between student reps and staff could be organised before the end of semester. She said a handover for next year's CIVIS reps should be discussed at such a meeting.

M Clarke said she has drafted the CIVIS handover document and that this will likely be passed to the next VP Education. She said she will try to organise a CIVIS meeting between involved staff and students. She said the University Principal indicated that the University wishes to investigate short-term mobility options – something the SRC has already considered. M Clarke added that the Principal indicated that Glasgow University will not be a part of certain CIVIS discussions, as it is an alliance partner and not a member of the European Commission.

H Krogsaeter said, according to the CIVIS Student Council, Glasgow University is considered a full CIVIS partner.

E McCabe posited that the University may be less active with regards to CIVIS activity at this stage due to the newness of their involvement with the organisation. E McCabe said a meeting is necessary and that Council members would be updated afterwards on discussions.

M Clarke to  
organise CIVIS  
meeting  
between  
involved staff  
and student  
reps. Council  
members to be  
updated on  
discussions  
post-meeting.

H Krogsaeter said CIVIS is not well advertised by the University to its students.

E McCabe said she believed the University was planning on promoting CIVIS activity more heavily once it attained full CIVIS member status.

M Clarke said Glasgow University is technically a full, participating member of CIVIS, however, it is not permitted involvement in certain CIVIS discussions as it does not receive funding from the European Commission.

E McCabe said both the SRC and the University require greater clarity on this issue and asked if M Clarke and the CIVIS representatives on Council could attain this and update Council members with further information.

c) VP Student Activities: Sam Malis

The Volunteering, Clubs and Societies (VCS) Awards 2022 took place on 10/03/2022. The event was a success and S Malis expressed thanks to all those who helped with the organisation and delivery of the event. He said the in-person nature of the event was enjoyed and that feedback from the awards will inform subsequent years' VCS Awards.

S Malis organised a UofG Welcome trip to St. Andrews. 46 people attended and the group were hosted by the St. Andrews University Union. The initial announcement of the trip saw high engagement and tickets sold out within 1 day. More trips of this type are being discussed as they are particularly beneficial for international and exchange students to meet new people and explore Scotland.

S Malis will soon undertake work on a report on 2022 SRC Welcome activity.

E McCabe congratulated S Malis on the success of the St. Andrews trip and the glowing feedback it received. She emphasised the importance of the SRC continuing to run similar activities in the future.

d) VP Student Support: Eva Simmons

M Clarke and CIVIS reps to obtain clarity on GU member status and what this means in practice. To update Council with further info.

E Simmons attended meetings with members of the Green New Deal. David Duncan has agreed to support the organisation of peoples' assemblies/forums. Such events would be designed to gather opinion from the wider student population on certain issues. E Simmons said she believes such events are very worthwhile, noting that, at the SEC meeting last week, it was mentioned that the sustainability action tracker has been taken off the SEC agenda as it was felt that further consultation was needed regarding increasing the ambitiousness of the project. The forums would be held in collaboration with GUEST, and the SRC would lead them in conjunction with this group. E Simmons asked if any Council members would be interested in helping her devise what shape the events might take. She said interested Council members are welcome to email her.

H Pentleton, M Mojsiej and K Craig indicated that they would be happy to assist E Simmons with working on the assemblies.

T Anderson asked for clarification on the following sentence in E Simmons Council report –

*Uni CAPs have undergone changes away from offering therapeutic sessions to a 'wellbeing approach'.*

E Simmons said there has been a shift away from a default offering of a series of therapeutic sessions. CaPS are no longer offering direct support for trauma or other moderate to severe mental health issues as the University does not believe it has a responsibility to offer these services when the NHS already offer them. CaPS is now, instead, signposting students with moderate to severe issues to the NHS. E Simmons said she is concerned that this new approach may miss a cohort of students who do not present with serious issues but who require more advanced support than wellbeing support. E Simmons said she is going to push for a full consultation to take place to determine if students who are using the service are happy with it.

T Anderson said he feels the University do not wish to take responsibility for tackling student mental health issues. He said a problem exists whereby students are not even aware of the University's mental health services. He said the lack of service users has resulted in the University providing limited support to students with regards to mental health support. T Anderson said the mental health of students is

H Pentleton, M Mojsiej and K Craig to assist E Simmons with work on people's sustainability assemblies.

E Simmons to push for full consultation to take place on student experience of CaPS. Use feedback to lead review/analysis of current effectiveness of service.

an extremely important issue and that he is concerned of rising mental health issues as Covid-19 restrictions ease and in-person exams return. He agreed with E Simmons that a consultation would be beneficial for this purpose.

L Brady said an issue is that CaPS cannot retain staff – staff are leaving for better paid, similar positions elsewhere. L Brady said he believes work must be done to address this issue. He noted also the issue of students who are referred to CaPS being placed on a waiting list for support.

E McCabe said competitive salaries need to be offered across the University's services. In relation to the points raised by T Anderson she said that the University has responded to each criticism raised and justified its approach, stating that it takes a more centred approach in order to cater to the landscape of mental health issues at the University. E McCabe posited that the University has lost sight of the importance of the student experience of the service. She said E Simmons is pushing for the University to gather feedback from students on their experiences of the service, with a view to using this information to lead a review/analysis of the current effectiveness of the service.

E Simmons said if there are issues with the service then the SRC must consider ways such issues can be addressed.

T Meadows said there is supposed to be a hierarchy of places where students can go for support before they approach CaPS, however, students are not aware of these other services. She said there should be a Student Support Officer in each School but that her School was not aware it had one. She asked if this had happened in any other Schools.

E McCabe said the SRC is aware of ongoing issues with the implementation of Student Support Officers across the board.

E Simmons asked T Meadows to email her with the specific details of the issue so that she could raise it as a concern with the Student Support Officer Implementation Group

- e) PG Arts Convenor: Kevin Leomo
- f) UG MVLS Convenor: Lewis O'Connor
- g) UG Science and Engineering Convenor: Jamie Mckay

T Meadows to email E Simmons with specific details of student support officer-related issue in her School, so that E Simmons can raise at SSOIG.



h) UG Social Sciences Convenor: Duncan Henderson

D Henderson, whilst noting support for Ukraine and objection to the Russian invasion, said that sanctions on Russia have had a detrimental impact on the financial situations of Russian students at the University, who are unconnected to the Russian Government and the invasion of Ukraine. D Henderson said he was assured that the University is aware of these students and is supporting them but said he feels the SRC need to monitor this issue in future meetings in order to ensure all Russian students affected are adequately supported.

E McCabe said the University's Alumni and Development team recently contacted alumni to ask for donations to the Hardship fund. The University stated that its Hardship Fund is currently supporting Russian and Ukrainian students, however, it is unsure how long this support will be needed. As such, its additional drive for funding is to prepare for the long-term. E McCabe agreed with D Henderson that the SRC should monitor this issue for the long-term.

- i) Chemistry School Rep: Grace Cleasby
- j) Computing School Rep: Zoltan Kiss
- k) Engineering School Rep: Amandeep Kainth
- l) Geographical and Earth Science School Rep: Elizabeth Barre
- m) Humanities School Rep: Reece Paul
- n) Law School Rep: Miko Mojsiej
- o) Life Sciences School Rep: Hanne Krogsaeter
- p) Mathematics and Statistics School Rep: Michalis Stavrou
- q) Medicine School Rep: Kirsty Craig

The School of Medicine, Dentistry and Nursing passed the course K Craig proposed. This course will be implemented for all incoming 1<sup>st</sup> Year Students. K Craig thanked Council members for their input on her presentation provided at the last meeting.

- r) Physics & Astronomy School Rep: Abigail Whelan
- s) Psychology School Rep: Paul Skinner
- t) Social and Political Sciences School Rep: Matilda Franz
- u) Disability Equality Officer: Hailie Pentleton
- v) Gender Equality Officer: Rinna Vare
- w) Mental Health Equality Officer: Miko Mojsiej (acting MHEO)
- x) General Rep: Lewis Trundle

Sabbs to monitor, for the long term (in future meetings with Uni), issue of financial support for Russian students affected by sanctions, as well Ukrainian students with financial issues.

y) First Year Rep: Isaac Gilbert

z) First Year Rep: Tony Anderson

T Anderson said there is an instance of language in a Council member's report which he feels could be read as wrongly suggesting other Council members have not performed their roles.

E McCabe acknowledged T Anderson's statement. She asked that all Council members keep their language respectful when discussing the work of others but encouraged Council members to hold their fellow representatives' work to account, in a respectful manner, at Council meetings.

10. AOCB

11. Date of next meeting – 21<sup>st</sup> April 2022