

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY THE 16TH NOVEMBER 2022 AT 6.00 PM
ZOOM/ ROOM 201, MCINTYRE BUILDING

ACTION

Present : As per sederunt

Apologies : S Lombardo, N O'Brien, A Saxena, S Grover, Y Ye, I Libelli, A Kukreja

Attending: P Swinton, G Connor, J Small

- 1) Welcome, Apologies and Sederunt
- 2) Minute of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

Minutes of previous meeting approved.

Information Services have reported that the hot water facilities in the Library have now been fixed.

R Väre reminded Council members to submit their photos for the Council board outside the Williams Room.

R Väre asked Council members to always contact Sabbatical Officers/SRC staff via email if the matter pertains to their role. She said the Council group chat on Messenger can be used for informal conversation. The Council Facebook group can be used for highlighting matters to Council members between meetings.

If a Council member wishes to work on a project they are encouraged to contact their line manager in the first instance, or if it involves a Committee they sit on with a Sabbatical Officer, the relevant Officer. They will then be advised on the best course of action.

To make Council meetings as efficient as possible, Council members are encouraged to submit any questions via email to the SRC President in advance of the meeting. R Väre asked Council members to keep their contributions concise and relevant to the topic being discussed.

- 3) Council Reports

a) SRC President: Rinna Väre

The SRC has now signed the open letter and pledge relating to GU Amnesty's Stop Killer Robots campaign. It will meet with the society again on 18/11/2022.

As advocated for by the SRC, the University has now emailed all students with information on the support available for those struggling with accommodation/cost-of-living issues. The SRC will continue to push for messaging on this.

Visits to PBSAs have been organised as part of the SRC's Exam De-stress campaign. This will allow the SRC to build engagement with students in these accommodations.

The SRC's Cap Student Numbers campaign document will be presented at University Court next week.

b) VP Education: Micaela Levesque

The Class Rep Teams channel has seen increased engagement this year in comparison with previous years. There is a significant administrative burden with this channel, however, so M Levesque is discussing a potential solution with IT Services. The system must be GDPR compliant and workable for the SRC's Admin staff. Discussions are ongoing.

The Class Rep Mixer event planned for 17/11/2022 sold out very quickly, indicating increased engagement from Class Reps. Events next semester will have increased capacity to build engagement further.

The Student Voice Working Group will begin next week. P Moran Ruiz attended the first planning meeting for this. Feedback from the Academic Forum was used to create a preliminary presentation for the group on the student experience.

Concerns regarding the winter exam diet were discussed at the recent Academic Forum. The SRC is contacting Gary Stephen to ask how SafeZone can be implemented in off-campus exam spaces. Karen Lee has also been contacted regarding planning for learning and teaching space next year and she has agreed to undertake further consultation on this with the Academic Forum.

The SRC has been in contact with the Business School and Student Learning and Development regarding the resources and systems they have in place for academic conduct cases. The Business School plan to implement a new system for these within the next exam diet and new resources are being developed by SLD with the hope that these will be in place during the next term.

M Levesque addressed Council's academic representatives and said there may be some confusion regarding what meetings to attend, the process for being invited to meetings and the scope of the representational requirements of their roles. She said this is being explored in advance of the next SRC election, particularly with regard to the effect that the re-structuring of MVLS will have on Council positions. Discussions regarding this matter are ongoing and involve the Life Sciences Portfolio Rep and the SRC Admin Team. Any Council member with concerns/issues should contact the Sabbatical Officers.

c) VP Student Activities: Katie Fish

The SRC's Movember campaign is ongoing and involves a coordinated effort from University societies.

K Fish attended a Kelvingrove lighting and safety workshop run by Glasgow City Council and Greenspace Scotland. She communicated that improved lighting is needed in this space. K Fish will continue to advocate for this.

K Fish has undertaken introduction meetings with School representatives.

d) VP Student Support: Hailie Pentleton

The SRC is currently planning the development of anti-racism workshops. O Saleh and H Pentleton will meet to review options for this next week.

The Successful and Inclusive Learning Policy has almost completed its review stage. H Pentleton will be involved with the University's communications on how this policy is implemented. Disabled students who have benefitted from the policy are also encouraged to be involved. Interested students should contact H Pentleton.

The QMU's GBV support was discussed at Welfare Forum. The SRC met with the QMU this week to ensure overlaps in work are being avoided and that each organisation supports each other's work effectively. The SRC and the QMU plan to meet with CaPS to ensure the QMU's proposed support group for students is facilitated safely and appropriately.

H Pentleton's work on the review of the University's Student Carers' policy is ongoing. The SRC is working alongside the Widening Participation team on increasing engagement with process. Student Carers who are interested in providing feedback should contact H Pentleton.

- e) PG Arts Convenor: Alex Symington
 - f) PG MVLS Convenor: Ebrahim Makhoul
 - g) PG Social Sciences Convenor: Tim Pu
 - h) UG Arts Convenor: Kayz Kurmaly
 - i) UG Science and Engineering Convenor: Temisan Atsegoh
 - j) UG Social Sciences Convenor: Ross Whip
 - k) Critical Studies School Rep: Mariama Bah
 - l) Engineering School Rep: Hugh Southall
 - m) Humanities School Rep: Emma Murray
 - n) Mathematics and Statistics School Rep: Jordan Baillie
 - o) Modern Languages and Culture School Rep: Sara Lombardo
 - p) Physics & Astronomy School Rep: Heri Busquier Cerdan
 - q) Psychology & Neuroscience School Rep: Natalie van Rooyen
 - r) Social and Political Sciences School Rep: Irene Libelli
 - s) Charities Officer: Lewis Trundle
 - t) Environmental Officer: Erika Makipere
 - u) Gender Equality Officer: Valeria Palomar Conesa
 - v) LGBTQ+ Officer: Pablo Moran Ruiz
 - w) Mental Health Equality Officer: Tony Anderson
 - x) Race Equality Officer: Omar Saleh
 - y) General Rep: Theo Frater
 - z) General Rep: Miko Mojsiej
 - aa) General Rep: Jaimin Prashant Desai
 - bb) First Year Rep: Abheer Kukreja
- 4) Cap Student Numbers Campaign

The SRC's Cap Student Numbers Campaign was launched on 16/11/2022. The document outlining the SRC's demands was sent to the University Principal on 14/11/2022. As it contains confidential information from University Committees it will not be shared publicly. It will, however, be shared with Court and be discussed at the next Court meeting. The University has been responsive to the SRC's demands in principle and is happy with how the campaign has been approached. It is currently preparing its response and this will be discussed at Court, with any decisions regarding the campaign being ratified there. The hope is the University's response will be published by late next week.

H Southall asked which demands the University is expected to meet.

R Väre said the SRC's expectation is the University will meet all of its demands. She said there was concern regarding the 5-year cap on student numbers as numbers are difficult to predict. The SRC accepts this and is happy with a leeway of approximately 1200 students either way over this period.

M Levesque said the University believes it will commit to no more than a 1200 student increase over 5 years but are still finalising this with the University planning team. The University also believes it will be able to reinstate the accommodation guarantee for incoming students. Details of the terms of this will be given to the SRC in due course, alongside plans for provision of space for clubs, societies and teaching. The University has also indicated it may form a working group to look at the planning cycle for next year and that the SRC will be involved in this. It has also indicated that such a group may continue to sit for subsequent years and that the SRC will form part of it.

R Väre said, while the University is responsive to the SRC's demands in principle, the details of each demand are still being negotiated. A subgroup of University senior management staff is preparing the University's response and looking at how demands can be met and under what conditions. The rest of senior management must then approve these plans.

T Anderson said in his capacity as a committee member of the Mature Students' Association he was approached in a hostile manner by a member of another student body who demanded to know why their organisation had not been included in discussions regarding the SRC's campaign. He said he should not have been approached in this way and asked if there were plans to communicate with the other student bodies regarding the campaign.

R Väre said it has been made clear at Cross Campus meetings with the other student bodies that student numbers are a high priority for the SRC. The other student bodies have not displayed strong interest on working actively with the SRC on this. She added that a lot of the data detailed in the SRC's document could not be shared with the other student bodies due to confidentiality reasons. R Väre expressed a willingness to have the support of the other student bodies on the campaign and for them to be involved in discussions. She said, as the body which represents students' interests at the University, the SRC was best placed to campaign for the University to act regarding student numbers.

T Anderson said the person he spoke to communicated a concern that the SRC's campaign could cause conflict between the University and the student bodies.

R Väre said any issues of concern could be brought to the Sabbatical Officers.

R Whip asked what Council members could do to support the campaign other than sharing it online.

R Väre advised speaking to peers, student groups, trade unions and clubs/societies to raise awareness of the campaign. She said the campaign should inform and drive Council member's work where possible.

T Frater asked if there are concerns that the University may commit to meeting the SRC's demands only to renege on them later.

R Väre said this is a concern, however, the demand for the University to commit publicly to the SRC's demands is designed to reduce the possibility of this happening. The 5-year moratorium is also designed to reassure future students and Councils that they will not have to campaign for these changes on a yearly basis. She said breaking commitments would result in a significant student backlash against the University.

M Levesque said continued sharing of the campaign increases the likelihood of it being picked up by news outlets. This, in turn, decreases the likelihood of the University reneging on commitments. M Levesque added that if the University goes back on any commitments and the student bodies can provide evidence of this during an institutional

review, this would be damaging for the University in the view of national funding bodies.

T Pu said departmental funding has been decreased. He asked, if the SRC continues to push the University to cap student numbers, would the University recruit more international students to fill the shortfall in funding.

M Levesque said funding-per-student is discussed by the Student Experience Committee. If this was to be reduced then the SRC could address this, however, it is not of relevance to the student numbers campaign. The campaign does, however, address the fact that fee-paying international students have been recruited without additional support for their programmes. The campaign's actions specifically address these problems and work to ensure that the educational quality of these students is not negatively impacted. Such concerns could also be referenced in the end-of-year quality reports if needed.

R Väre said Council members who are contacted by the press should forward any enquiries to the SRC Communications Team.

5) UCU Industrial Action

UCU has announced that strike action will take place on the 24th, 25th and 30th of November.

M Levesque suggested that the SRC consider the strike in action in two stages: it must vote on whether to support the UCU's industrial action (this would involve sharing a statement of support/posting about the strikes on SRC social media and/or joining the picket line). Secondly, if there is an agreement for general support then Council would be invited to send the Sabbatical Officers suggestions of further support measures for the UCU. This could include suggestions on how strike fund money could be allocated.

K Fish noted that the SRC publicly supported the UCU strikes last year but did not express a public opinion in previous years.

S Lombardo asked where Council members could find further information on what pay demands the University has met.

M Levesque said this information is on the University website, as well as on UCU's website.

G Connor said anyone under Grade Point 20 will be uplifted by 2 points on the salary scale. Lower-paid staff will receive a pay-rise of up to 12%. Staff at Grade Point 20 and above will receive a 6% pay rise. G Connor said she could circulate a copy of these statistics if desired.

A discussion ensued in which most contributing Council members voiced support for the SRC to publicly support the UCU's upcoming strike action. Among the reasons for this were the fact that inflation has rendered proposed pay-rises a real-time pay-cut; the rise in casualisation of labour contributing to a profit-driven, business-first mindset from the University; issues with pay being withheld for some staff members and the high rise in student numbers causing staff to become overworked, thus damaging their ability to teach and, in turn, negatively impacting students' learning experiences. It was also noted that many UCU members are students themselves (graduate teaching assistants) and that the current issues, if not resolved, could pose a danger to students entering the academic profession in the future. In addition, support for the UCU's aims was deemed important given the University Principal's influence over many staff members' pensions.

While Council members broadly supported the strike action, the necessity of the SRC taking a stance was questioned and it was posited that support for the strikes may lie outside the SRC's remit. Council members agreed however that, in any case, supporting students through the strikes would be of key importance and the Sabbatical Officers communicated their belief that, considering the impact on students, the SRC should be clear on its stance. Council members asserted the importance of educating students on why the strikes are happening so that they understand the aims and that any frustrations over disruption are directed towards the University rather than lecturers. It was posited that the latter could be achieved by working with the UCU.

T Pu asked if the UCU would support the SRC's student numbers campaign if the SRC supported the strike action.

R Väre said the UCU, though not officially, has already expressed support for the campaign. The hope is the UCU will support the campaign publicly on its channels.

T Frater asked if senior management would receive a pay-rise.

R Väre said this is decided by the Remuneration committee on which she and UCU representatives sit. She said senior management would

receive an uplift of 3% in line with other University staff. Any further uplifts would be decided in Spring.

N O'Brien asked for clarification on what impact the strike action would have on students and how the SRC can support them.

R Väre said there will be 3 days of strike action and the UCU hopes this will suffice. The University will work to minimise disruption for students and has confirmed that Winter graduations will still go ahead. The SRC will also lobby the University to ensure students are not assessed on material they have not been taught.

M Levesque said the proposed strike action will consist of non-teaching days and will not include a marking boycott.

H Southall asked why the UCU has not accepted the University's pay deal when other unions have.

R Väre said the UCU's strike action relates to matters in addition to pay and that action is being taken in solidarity with other UCU members across the UK. She added that the dispute is taking place on a national level whereas the other unions' disputes were on a local level.

T Anderson said the shift back to in-person teaching this year will mean students cannot access recorded teaching materials as they were able to during the strikes last year.

R Väre said the availability of online materials will depend on the approaches of the individual staff members striking.

H Busquier Cerdan noted that he works part-time for the University.

Council members voted on whether the SRC should publicly support the UCU's strike action. Council voted to support, with 29 votes for and 3 against.

6. AOCB

- Academic Forum Notes – Micaela Levesque
- Welfare Forum Notes – Hailie Pentleton

T Pu asked if the University has committed to providing an accommodation guarantee to all students as part of the Cap Student Numbers campaign.

M Levesque said the campaign has demanded that the University review its accommodation policy so that it has accurate information on whether it can guarantee accommodation for all students. More details on this matter will be provided in due course.

T Pu asked if the demand for the University not to increase students by 1200 over 5 years was informed by the student numbers this year.

M Levesque said the number is based on last year's student numbers as this year's numbers have not yet been finalised.

R Väre said the SRC recognises the difficulty of sticking to an exact number of students so it has given the University leeway for a slight increase or decrease in numbers over the 5-year period.

- Motion – Recognising Care Experience as a Protected Characteristic – Tony Anderson

H Pentleton referred to point 2 of the motion and said the University already has plans to review its Corporate Parenting plan and that care experienced students would be involved in consultations. As such, this does not need to be a demand of the motion.

R Väre said if the motion was passed by Council then consideration must be taken of the actions which must be taken in recognising care experience as a protected characteristic. She said this could be an action point for herself and H Pentleton and possible actions could include a blog post on the SRC website.

T Anderson acknowledged that a review of the Corporate Parenting plan was being undertaken by the University but said the motion includes extra detail requesting that the University include care experience as a protected characteristic within the plan. He said, if passed, the SRC would be the first student body in the world to pass a motion of this kind.

R Väre said the demands set out in the motion could be addressed in relevant University committee meetings and, particularly, through working with the Widening Participation team.

H Southall asked if passing the motion would require the creation of a new SRC representative position on Council.

R Väre said this work would come under the remit of the recently created Widening Participation representative roles.

H Busquier Cerdan asked if passing the motion would require allocating a portion of the SRC's budget to this work.

R Väre said recognising care experience as a protected characteristic would not require a financial commitment from the SRC. She said the SRC is keen to support care experienced students so financial support for any specific projects could be discussed as and when projects happen.

Council members voted on whether the SRC should support the motion to recognise care experience as a protected characteristic. Council voted to support, with 29 votes for and 1 against.

- Motion – The SRC to Fund Election Campaigns – Miko Mojsiej

R Väre said the Sabbatical Officers recognise the importance of minimising barriers to participation in student representation and the intention within M Mojsiej's motion to do this. She outlined, however, that some of the suggestions within the motion are not feasible given current limitations. The chief concerns would be that, as there are no specific funding amounts mentioned in the motion, it would be difficult to plan the SRC's finances year-on-year and there would be a lack of consistency in election candidate funding across successive years (this would be further complicated by the fact election candidate numbers cannot be predicted in advance). Without specific funding amounts agreed, Council members would also be voting on a motion which could potentially result in diminished funding for other SRC services, such as a reduction to its campaigns budget. Measures such as checking receipts to ensure candidates have not over-spent on campaigns were noted as being extremely difficult to implement in practice, with no SRC staff having the capacity to take these duties on.

R Väre suggested, given the budgetary and policy implications of the motion and the importance of Council members being fully aware of the implications of any motion they vote on, M Mojsiej, K Fish, M Levesque, G Connor (and possibly a limited number of council members) should form a sub-group to discuss and develop an implementable motion which could be discussed and voted on at the next Council meeting, with the intention it would be put into practice for the Spring Election. She suggested that a £5 printing coupon for each election candidate to print posters/leaflets could be a feasible way

of financially supporting candidates' election campaigns, with candidates also being encouraged to practice environmentally friendly campaigning.

M Mojsiej said that the motion does not include set budgetary amounts for funding/reimbursement as the intention was that amounts would be discussed and set by Council. He said the motion was principally for solidifying the intention for the SRC to fund candidates' election campaigns. M Perras said she felt it was important that the motion be voted on, even if just to be tabled for further discussion at the next Council meeting. She said this was important given 6 Council members seconded the motion.

R Väre proposed that the motion be tabled for the next meeting of Council, with a working group being established in the interim to develop the motion further. The motion would then be discussed and voted on at the next meeting of Council. Council members would have the opportunity to provide input on the working group's discussions by emailing comments to M Levesque or K Fish. Council members voted for this course of action, with 22 votes of support and 7 votes against.

11. Date of next meeting – Tuesday 6th December, 2022