

MINUTES OF SRC COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON THURSDAY 15TH FEBRUARY 2024 AT 6.00 PM
MCINTYRE BUILDING
ROOM 201/ZOOM

Present: As per sederunt

Apologies: B Hay, L Thompson, A Wilson, S Blackburn, O Saleh, E Olaleye, M Piermattei, M Corbett, V Palomar Conesa, D Rogers, L Leonhard

Attending: G Connor, J Small, P Swinton

- **Welcome, Apologies and Sederunt**

- **Minute of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising**

Minutes of previous meeting approved.

T Anderson confirmed LGBT+ history month information was circulated to Council members.

P Su apologised for not sending a summary of the situation with Medical School exams issues to R Whip and said he would send this information over.

- **Action Surrounding Divestment from Arms Industry**

- a. Update from H Pentleton-Owens

H Pentleton Owens said she received Glasgow Against Arms and Fossil Fuel's (GAAF's) report just before the last meeting of the Finance Committee. She and R Whip met with GAAF representatives where they outlined the SRC's stance in support of the University's divestment from the arms trade. They also reassured GAAF that this stance would be made clear at the Finance Committee meeting, as would the SRC's view that the establishment of a working group to look at the issue constitutes delaying tactic.

- b. GAAF Paper

H Pentleton said GAAF's list of demands has been updated and the group is now demanding a full University divestment from the arms trade; that the University ban all arms companies from recruiting on campus; that the University launch a public investigation into the bombing of Gaza; that the University provide funding for the rebuilding of a bombed university in Gaza; that the University confirm no students or staff will be penalised for their roles in supporting these aims.

H Pentleton said representatives of GAAF initially agreed to come to Council to present their report and asked for regular meetings to be set up with the SRC. However, since their initial meeting with the SRC there has been no response from GAAF when they have been contacted to set up a subsequent meeting. The SRC has been made aware of restructuring within GAAF which may explain the absence in communication. H

Pentleton Owens said, as GAAF are not present at the meeting, the decision has been taken not to hold a vote at this meeting on whether Council supports GAAF's aims or not. She added, however, that if any Council member wished to submit a motion on the matter they should do so.

H Southall asked if GAAF's demands and P Moran Ruiz's motion covered employees' pension contributions.

H Pentleton Owens said that the motion covered those cases wherein the University was directly investing in arms. Pension contributions would come under a full divestment from any company with associated investments or trade.

c. Motion submitted by P Moran Ruiz

P Moran Ruiz said he has submitted 'A Motion to Advocate for Divestment in the Arms Industry' to give Council the opportunity to reaffirm its stance on divestment.

T Frater asked if the motion pertains to the SRC divesting from the arms trade or the University divesting from the arms trade.

H Pentleton clarified the motion pertains to the latter.

Amendments

H Pentleton-Owens proposed adding a fifth point to the motion which would investigate point 4 and would propose the formation of a short-life working group, involving P Moran Ruiz, which would work to raise awareness and educate students and staff on the ethical implications of the arms industry.

Amendment passed with 22 votes for, 1 for reject and 1 abstain.

Motion announced as passed with 18 votes for (quorate) and 2 against.

- **Council Reports**

SRC President - H Pentleton Owens

H Pentleton Owens said all relevant information on her activities between Council meetings can be found in her Council report.

VP Education - Ross Whip

R Whip said the University recently decided to move Year 3 and Year 4 Life Sciences students back to an in-person exam format. R Whip is a member of the Exams Planning Group and has been very vocal against this decision; the reason being it has a disproportionate impact on students from protected groups and students from low-income backgrounds/those who work part-time. Further issues regarding this decision are concerns around international students giving up accommodation/booking flights home and being impacted financially, as

well as concerns around students not having experienced an in-person exam format before. These concerns were taken on board, however, ultimately the University's view is that the integrity of its exams should be prioritised. R Whip also raised concerns about the lack of involvement of SRC Life Sciences representatives in the decision-making process. He said, however, that SRC representatives will attend a meeting on the matter tomorrow.

R Whip said he intends to meet with the staff involved in the decision-making process so that the decision can be discussed. He added that he has also been in touch with Martin Hendry (Clerk of Senate) regarding the matter. He said he has provided Life Sciences representatives with a template email for getting back to students who contact them about the issue and highlighted concerns that these Representatives have been confronted in class about the matter – something which Martin Hendry has apologised for happening. R Whip said if Council members are made aware of concerns from individual students, they should signpost these students to the Advice Centre or the University's MS form.

P Su said he received a few media requests asking for him to comment on the situation.

H Pentleton-Owens said any media requests should be forwarded to her and the SRC Communications team.

P Moran Ruiz said he is aware of a student who is studying a course which requires them to sit an exam in-person while other students on the course are sitting the same exam online.

R Whip said he has not been made aware of such an issue. He said he will follow up on this and that the student should be advised to contact The Advice Centre.

E Barnett said she is aware that a student petition has been started seeking to overturn the decision. She added that she is aware students are collecting information on the issue but said she is not sure for what purpose.

R Whip said students cannot, nor should they, be stopped from circulating petitions, however, he said he believes these petitions will ultimately be unsuccessful in their attempts - the reason being that the University has effectively admitted it has no confidence in the integrity of its exams, and therefore if it overturned this decision, it would be holding exams that it cannot trust.

V Soares said, at the Neuroscience Forum yesterday, students were asking if their exams would be delivered in two formats. The School said they were looking into this, however, the School of Psychology has confirmed it will not change to online exams. As such, Psychology exams will be online and Neuroscience exams would be in person.

R Whip asked for the name and details of the course in question to be sent to him immediately.

P Su said he is aware of the Google form referred to by E Barnett and said other forms have been created and shared with him. He said there is a Q&A session organised for after the meeting tomorrow. P Su said he is going to collate the info from the Google form and send this to R Whip for his approval before sending to Life Sciences staff.

R Whip asked if the details of the meeting referred to by P Su could be forwarded to him. He reiterated the importance of being balanced and neutral when gathering feedback from students using a form.

At the Academic Forum on 06/02/2024, the University's Transforming Curriculum workstream attended to present on their newly proposed Interdisciplinary Learning Project (ILP). It was announced at the Learning & Teaching Committee on 14/02/2024 that the course will be launched next year during the Spring and Summer vacation. R Whip raised a concern that piloting it during those times may not receive a strong response from students, especially from typically underrepresented groups who are supposed to benefit most from the introduction of the ILP.

R Whip strongly encouraged Council members to submit nominations for the 2024 Student Teaching Awards (STAs). He expressed thanks to O Saleh for all his work in this area.

R Whip said it is the SRC's understanding that meetings regarding reforming the University's Good Cause system are supposed to be taking place, however, the SRC has not yet received an update on this area of work.

The 2024 Class Rep Conference will be held on Thursday 8th March. Lunch and hot drinks will be provided for Class Reps throughout the day. R Whip encouraged Council members to advertise the event to their class reps.

R Whip said he posted padlets seeking Council members' feedback prior to next meeting of the Library Committee. He encouraged Council members to submit feedback.

H Pentleton-Owens asked Council members to observe proper meeting etiquette and to refrain from speaking when others were delivering updates.

VP Student Activities – Mariama Bah

M Bah thanked those who helped with shortlisting for the 2024 VCS Awards.

M Bah said there has been an increase in the number of complaints from performing arts societies about the lack of space on campus for their activities. She said the SRC has consistently raised this matter with Karen Lee from Estates. She added that part of the issue stems from the fact the University's short course evening classes are returning to an in-person format after being online during the pandemic. M Bah said the SRC are continuing to investigate the lack of space for societies on campus and any Council members with information to provide here should contact her.

VP Student Support – Tony Anderson

T Anderson said he raised a concern around the new Cost of Living Action Group Intern's employment contract (12 weeks) not being enough time to conduct the necessary work in this area. T Anderson said he has been made aware there is a possibility the contract may be extended.

The last Welfare Forum took place on Tuesday 13th February. This included a review of how the Welfare Forum works and T Anderson said good feedback was received. He is typing this feedback up and will bring it to the next Council meeting.

T Anderson thanked the Council members who brought an email regarding the SRC and the Emily Test to his attention. He said the Emily Test was raised at Gender Equality Group and it was clarified that the reason the University has not signed up to it is because the University's requirements from the Ross Report have not been met yet. The University's Gender Equality Champion, Sara Carter, has committed to sending an email to the four student bodies explaining why the University is not signing up to the Emily Test. T Anderson said the SRC are not signing up to it because it does not have the capacity to, nor would it be an appropriate use of resources as the SRC is already undertaking considerable work in this area. T Anderson said the SRC remains committed to improving education and support around GBV.

T Anderson thanked the Sabbatical Officers and the SRC's Representation team for their support while he has been on sick leave.

H Busquier Cerdan thanked everyone who came to the recent Good Practice workshop on 01/02/2024. He said he hopes to share the results with his College LTC next week.

- **LTC Away Day Report**

R Whip said the SRC is still regularly pushing in University Committees for the temporal demands on students to be considered when the University is planning assessments, lecture recordings and other learning and teaching-related activities. Due to capacity issues, the SRC has been unable to launch a campaign addressing these concerns this year, however, the Sabbatical Officers did raise the issue at Senior Management Group (SMG) and received some promising feedback.

- **AOCB**

- a. Upcoming Events

T Anderson thanked J Small for organising the installation of the new SRC rainbow on third floor of the University Library.

T Anderson said the SRC's Rocky Horror event, which is part of LGBT+ History Month, will take place on 22/02/2024.

T Anderson said the SRC's event planning for International Women's Week 2024 is underway.

M Bah reminded Council members that the VCS Awards will take place on the 07/03/2024.

J Small said the SRC's Volunteering and Social Justice Festival will take place on 19/02/2024. He encouraged Council members to attend.

b. Elections

H Pentleton-Owens reminded Council members of the key dates for the upcoming SRC Autumn election. She said any Council members with questions should email her or elections@src.gla.ac.uk

H Pentleton said the University Rector elections are coming up soon and reminded Council members that they are prohibited from endorsing candidates in their SRC capacity. The 4 currently confirmed candidates are Paul Sweeney MSP, Lady Rita Rae, Susan McCabe and Dr. Ghassan Abu-Sittah

c. Welcome Week Report

This report was circulated to Council members in advance of the meeting for their information.

- **Date of next meeting** – Thursday 28th March, 2024