

## MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING

HELD ON THURSDAY THE 22nd JANUARY 2026 AT 6.00 PM

ROOM 201, MCINTYRE BUILDING AND ZOOM

Present: As per sederunt

Apologies: K Kirkpatrick

Attending: B Hay, J Small, K Allan (clerk)

---

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

Minutes of previous meeting approved.

D Calvert provided an update on compassionate communications from UK Visas & Immigration Compliance. A Garg has followed up with Chris Buckland and is working with him on a draft outlining how the department communicates with international students. This has been noted as a positive development, and updates will be provided as work progresses.

D Calvert noted that the £60,000 upfront fee is set by UKVI and cannot be circumvented by the University. D Calvert also reiterated that the University is lobbying the UK government regarding unfair visa rules and he will continue to update with any news that comes from this.

- 3) Council Reports Written Reports Received –
  - a) SRC President: Duncan Calvert

D Calvert referred back to the December presentation on student experience, noting that student experience has moved from the enabling layer up to a key focus of the strategy. While we see how this affects the implementation cycle in practice, D Calvert acknowledged this was a good achievement, with student experience now embedded across all strands of the strategy.

With regards to Project Compass and ongoing work with compassionate communications, D Calvert explained the Quality Assurance Agency Scotland (QAA) has released a draft review and the University has circulated it amongst staff.

This review was conducted by the QAA following the tragic death of Ethan Brown to examine the University's communications policy alongside related academic regulations and processes. The SRC will work with colleagues in Student Academic Services to assist in communicating the findings clearly to students.

D Calvert updated Council on The Gillies Working Group, established following the recent Gillies report, commissioned to investigate circumstances at University of Dundee which led to a financial crisis. One key outcome is that support will be offered to student trustees on University Court.

D Calvert will present to the Campus Development Maintenance Group on the student perspective of learning and teaching spaces and invited Council members to share any views for inclusion.

D Calvert added the Student Organisation Feasibility Study are exploring potential upgrades that can be made to the student union buildings, with progress more positively anticipated following the emphasis on student experience in the new strategy.

The SRC has circulated terms of reference to the Student Finance and Debt Collection Working Group, taking a positive step towards ensuring a more sympathetic and understanding approach to debt collection from already vulnerable students.

The SRC has developed some updated scams guidance on its website and circulated the link to students and University staff. Subsequently the SRC delivered a presentation to the Student Experience Committee on this subject, which was extremely well received.

In relation to the Campus Development Maintenance Group presentation, D Calvert clarified that the focus is on Estates matters. The Group is concerned with how the University estate can be improved for those on campus, and input is welcomed on estates, accessibility, design, and related issues rather than on course content.

An update was provided on the letter of representation to Court regarding divestment. The Humanitarian Response Working Group, chaired by Rachael Sanderson and supported by External Relations colleagues working on Sanctuary, has considered the letter. It was noted that much of the activity proposed is already underway, and the Group is open to meeting coalition representatives, with the exception of Glasgow University Justice for Palestine Society (GUJPS). Some requests fall outwith the

University's direct control, particularly around funding, which relies on external bodies such as the Council for At-Risk Academics (CARA). The University is continuing to lobby the Scottish and UK Governments on relevant matters. Ongoing engagement with the Sanctuary team will continue, particularly in areas where progress can be made and in supporting students arriving from Palestine.

It was confirmed that D Calvert will represent the group at the forthcoming Steering Group meeting.

b) VP Education: Ayush Garg

A Garg reported good progress on work relating to Student Voice within Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) meetings. He is currently exploring ways to standardise how SSLC meetings are conducted across the University.

A Garg also stated things were going well with Curriculum for life communications planning and AI policy discussions. The new University policy on AI use for 2026-2027 is in draft and is looking positive from a staff and student perspective. Also, A Garg and D Calvert attended the Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC) Away Day. There was a session on AI and student voice again with staff and students involved and there was insightful feedback from this.

A Garg thanked the School and College reps he met with over the last month to discuss School-specific issues and manifesto goals.

A Garg provided an update on his work with the Skills and Future Careers Scheme, aimed at finding new possible part-time jobs and internships with catering suppliers. A Garg received an email from the suppliers and there has been a draft made to send out to the Student Opportunities team.

A Garg reminded Council that Student Teaching Awards (STAs) nominations are currently open. He strongly urged Council members to encourage engagement before the voting closes on the 16<sup>th</sup> February.

c) VP Student Activities: Eoghan Morris

E Morris noted that the University is currently exploring ways to better utilise empty spaces on campus.

For the January Welcome Fair, E Morris reported that footfall was over 2,000 with over 100 societies represented. E Morris also noted the SRC is now midway through the

January Welcome campaign, seeing a 20% increase in mostly club-led and collaborative events. E Morris thanked the contributors to the campaign with specific thanks to F Chen, A Garg, R Gardener and J Afzal for helping with the International Student Mixer.

E Morris also thanked everyone in the organisation that participated in the December Destress Campaign, noting a 40% increase in the number of events, with the increase mainly comprised of club-led events.

E Morris provided an update that the Fraser Building Level 3 kitchen is now open with new microwaves, seating, and a serving space. E Morris's suggested uses for the space are outlined in his report.

E Morris highlighted the Survey commissioned to consult clubs and societies on access to room space and barriers to hosting events on campus. Staff working on this had been pleased with initial responses but E Morris asked if all club and society members could complete the survey before 30<sup>th</sup> January

In response to a question E Morris confirmed only committee members from currently affiliated societies are to complete the survey.

E Morris announced the Volunteering, Clubs & Societies Awards (VCS) nominations are now open and will close on 16<sup>th</sup> February. E Morris appealed for assistance with the shortlisting process for the awards, directing anyone interested to get in touch. E Morris will also circulate an email with further details.

L Thompson advised that the University's Student Experience Team has been emailing clubs and societies offering £300 to deliver events during the working day. The Team advised that uptake has been low and requested support from the SRC. It was agreed that the SRC would look into this, as there is currently limited clarity around the source of the funding and the intended recipients.

d) VP Student Support: Frank Chen

F Chen noted the success of the Disability History Month campaign, reporting that the number of events put on nearly doubled, as well as at least a 50% increase in participation from last year.

In relation to the open letter connected to the World Changers Need Access campaign, F Chen reported that the Principal has responded and acknowledged that campus accessibility falls short of the University's expectations. However, the response did not clarify how the accessibility fund is being used or what specific improvements are being

made to the experience of disabled students on campus. These concerns have been recognised by the Principal and will be taken forward for discussion at the forthcoming Disability Equality Working Group.

F Chen reported that LGBTQ+ History Month events are being finalised and highlighted some of the key events.

F Chen said the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee has been discussing the increasing number of scams targeting international students. F Chen will be sharing specific incidents with University Security to support increased awareness.

F Chen confirmed that the Cost of living Working Group, having not met for the last 6 months, has now been disbanded and integrated into the Student Experience Committee (SEC).

In relation to cost-of-living, the Graduation team will discuss a potential graduation fund with Student Finance in January. F Chen will update Council on this at the next meeting.

- e) International Students Officer: Reilly Gardner
- f) Widening Participation Officer: Amy Hutchison
- g) Widening Participation Officer: Hannah Clarkson
- h) UG MVLS Convenor: Ebrahim Rezaei
- i) PG Arts & Humanities Convenor: Kelly Yu
- j) Biodiversity, One Health & Veterinary Medicine School Rep: Elena Eliza-Pérez
- k) Critical Studies School Rep: Liberty Holmes
- l) Geographical & Earth Science Rep: Chloe Chigumba
- m) Law School Rep: Wesley Chew
- n) Molecular Biosciences School Rep: Julia Stephen
- o) Social & Political Sciences School Rep: Laurie Barr

L Barr informed Council that the School of Social and Political Sciences has introduced an AI declaration requiring students to state whether they have used AI, with a 2-point deduction applied if the declaration is not completed. L Barr stipulated that she does not consider this approach acceptable; this has been acknowledged by the School, and further updates will be provided as the situation progresses.

D Calvert added that he has received a draft AI policy for review and will follow up once it is published.

- p) General Representative: Laura Thompson
  - q) Charities Officer: Molly Corbett
  - r) Mental Health Equality Officer: Batseba Asmelash
  - s) Physics & Astronomy School Rep: Daniel Keane
  - t) First Year Rep: Caelyn Bailey
  - u) General Representative: Sarah Felkner
  - v) General Representative: Jannat Afzal
- 4) AOCB

H Watters raised concerns at the Academic Forum about inconsistencies between short and long extensions and the need for staff to raise additional welfare concerns for neurodivergent students, suggesting the current system may not be working effectively.

D Calvert acknowledged that while the new system represents an improvement, there are still growing pains. He expressed concern that the School has deviated from the University-wide policy on extenuating circumstances and asked H Watters to summarise the issue in an email to himself and A Garg.

H Watters confirmed she has emailed A Garg.

D Calvert emphasised that the matter will be addressed promptly and that concerns regarding neurodivergent students will be taken forward to the Disability and Equality Working Group and the Extenuating Circumstances team to help develop a more effective system.

N Gillies highlighted LGBTQ+ History Month and urged Council members to be in attendance and support event promotion.

L Thompson asked whether final-year undergraduate students are eligible to run for Council positions, referencing a previous instance where she was told she could not run due to her student status.

B Hay clarified that undergraduates are eligible and that current policy does not prevent this. B Hay noted that difficulties can arise when students leave Council roles midway through the year, and that the SRC is reviewing the relevant policy regarding this. There are some similar issues in relation to sabbatical positions

D Calvert acknowledged the previous mistake and confirmed that L Thompson is eligible to run again.

A Garg added that, for integrated masters students, the University system does not fully account for the UG/PG overlap, which may have contributed to the earlier issue.

E Eliza-Pérez asked whether the role of General Representatives will change as noted in the council report and whether references to elections and selection by the Business Committee will be removed.

D Calvert clarified that this concerns General Council and that the University Court selects two assessors. He said the University Court is reviewing how they are elected and that this is not related to the SRC.

A Chauhan noted plans to organise a Sustainability Week and invited anyone with ideas to contact her, while highlighting the potential for clashing campaigns.

D Calvert acknowledged the clashes in campaigns and asked if the dates were fixed.

A Chauhan replied it is scheduled for the first week of March. However, GUEST organised activities in the second week of March, and so the dates can be moved if necessary.

D Calvert suggested moving it to avoid clashes.

J Small advised A Chauhan to consult with their line manager and highlighted that this would be taking place alongside the International Women's Week Campaign.

D Calvert confirmed the matter will be addressed offline.

M Corbett asked if she could be involved in Refugee Week as Charities Officer and asked which Sabb would be responsible for organisational activities.

J Small confirmed F Chen will be the responsible Sabbatical Officer and that this year the focus will be on Refugee Day rather than Refugee Week.

D Calvert added that M Corbett can coordinate with F Chen on this matter.

5) Date of next meeting – Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2026