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Students’ Representative Council

Minutes

Air Bar, 21st of February 2023

Attendance

Audrey Oko (BME), Bailey Hope (LGBT+), Andre Costas (Environment and sustainability), Priya (Learning and Teaching), Bhuvana Sai Rheddy Komaragunta (Equality, Diversity and Welfare), Sai Rakshith Gupta Somisetty (Housing), Eamonn Custance (General), Aaron Fernandez (Employability), Prosper Dzitse (Taught Postgraduate), Victoria Simpson (Mature), Adam Robertson (IMC), Parissa Robinson (SRC Chairperson).

School Presidents

Liam Brown (Business), Helena Drylie (Business), Ayush Laddha (Dentistry), Louise Warburton (Life Sciences), Leia Ainscough (Science and Engineering).

Executive

Obiozor Okoro (Vice President of Representation), Zining Li (Vice President of Student Activities), Jazmine Bennett (Vice President of Community) .

Guests/Observers

## Chris Gourley (Head of Operations – Student Experience), Kellie Ioannou (Business Support Manager and PA to the CEO), Anna Broggi (Business Support Officer), Cameron Irons (Policy and Research Officer), Blair Grubb (Vice-Principal of Education), Vrinda Narain (Student Voice Support Officer), Lea Salles (Student Voice Support Officer), Valerya Krumova (Student Voice Support Officer)

## Minute-taker

Loukia Morari (Policy and Research Officer).

Apologies

Clara Seyfried (SHSSL), Aishwarya Jayakumar (Women’s), Adarsh Giri Warrier ( 1st Year ), Mavis Whytock (Disabilities), Muhammad Hamza Liaqat (Student Voice Support Officer), Alex Roberts (Student Voice Support Officer), Hasan Mahmood (Vice President of Fundraising), Nyasha (Ash) Mutembwa (President), Amarachi Ejim (Vice President of Student Wellbeing), Dominic Lee (Medicine/ SRC Vice-Chairperson), Simone Bairstow (Health Sciences), Keith Winters (Rectors Accessor), Mahh Ashraf (General), Christine Odaro (General).

Absent

Arshman Rehman Sahito (Facilities), Talha Iqbal Shahid (International).

1.Chair’s Welcome

1.1 The Chair welcomed the councilors to the meeting with special welcome to Adam Robertson the Independent Member of Court (IMC).

1.2 The Chair reminded SRC members that the meeting is a respectable space for constructive discussion, and also reminded the councilors that she would welcome individuals who had not yet spoken in previous meetings to express their ideas.

2. Minutes of last meeting – Paper A

2.1 Eamonn raised a discrepancy on point 10.6 with the number of votes, this was to be edited accordingly.

2.2 Proposer: Leia Ainscough

2.3 Seconder: Bailey Hope

3. Action Tracker – Paper B

3.1 Proposer: Liam Brown

3.2 Seconder: Prosper Dzitse

**Discussion**

4. The Execs response to the UCU strike motion

4.1 Obiozor announced the executive's response to the previously passed UCU strike motion as follows:

*‘The Board of Trustees of DUSA convened on Tuesday 7 February. During this meeting, extensive discussions took place on the position of the Executive Committee regarding the recently passed SRC motion on strike action. There is not a unanimous position within the Executive Committee regarding the action called for in the motion. The Executive Committee, as elected representatives, can agree a position and the Trustees would usually give their support to the position of the Executive Committee on any policy positions taken. It was concluded that the Board’s role is to ensure the Association is well governed; Trustees do not have jurisdiction over the actions of the University as it is a separate organisation. The role of the Board is to comply with the requirements of Scottish Charity Law. The general duties are: to act in the interests of the Charity; operate in a manner consistent with the charity’s purpose; act with care and diligence; and manage conflicts of interest between the charity and any trustee or associated business.*

*In this instance, the Trustees have unanimously agreed to support the efforts of the Executive Committee in navigating a very complex situation, while ensuring that the student experience stays at the forefront of this debate. As Executive Officers of the Students’ Association, the Executive Committee are the primary point of contact for all student concerns, yet it is important to recognise that the Executive Committee are also Trustees of the Association.*

The *collectively agreed responses from the Executive Committee pertaining to the motion are as follows:*

* *The Executive will meet with the UCU and engage in conversation with them, with a view to learn more about the strikes*
* *The Executive will email all students to provide information and an overview of their conversations with the UCU*
* *The Executive will circulate an FAQ guide surrounding the strike action to provide clarity to the student community*
* *Some members of the Executive will attend the UCU picket line – this is an individual decision for each of them to make*
* *The President will raise the issue of the strike and industrial action at Court and will update the SRC on the response from Court. The court will convene on 13 and 14 February.*
* *The Executive will engage in conversations with the University Executive Group and encourage them to move forward with negotiations and implement a no-detriment policy for students. ‘*

4.2 Jazmine emphasised that this was a difficult matter to agree upon.

4.3 Eamonn asked if there was an update on the response from Court and ongoing discussion with the University Executive Group (UEG). The executive could not provide a comprehensive response about Court in the President’s absence. Zechariah updated on the no detriment policy that had been drafted and circulated with members of the Exec with the intention of being applied to students effected by the ongoing industrial action.

4.4 The Executive then committed to having an update on their responses including the response from Court , meeting with the UCU and the FAQ document by the next SRC.

5. Raising Awareness of Trade Unions Motion – Paper C

5.1 The Chair welcomed Eamonn to present this motion for raising awareness of trade unions. The motion encourages students who work part time or recent graduates to engage with trade unions.

5.2 The Chair welcomed Aaron to comment on the motion. He is in support of this motion; however, he suggested that going forward the SRC could reach out to trade unions to assess how they engage with students. Jazmine pointed out that trade unions have been difficult to communicate with in the past. Additionally, they liked the idea of twice-yearly awareness event, they suggested that it could be a society sponsored event (e.g., DeeCon) since DUSA may not have the capacity to run these proposed plans.

5.3 Aaron also asked how this motion would be made accessible as trade unions normally charge a small monthly fee for membership. The Chair asked Chris to comment on this motion and he said that both staff and students are entitled to join trade unions if they want.

5.4 The Chair asked councilors to vote on the motion. Obiozor announced the votes, 15 responses, 14 for and 1 abstention. She announced the motion passed by the SRC.

6. Dundee Student Housing Co-op Motion – Paper D

6.1 The Chair welcomed Adam to introduce this motion for the housing co-op. Adam described the co-op as a democratic collective way of living with no external landlord. Empowering students to take control of their housing situation, encouraging community and living not for profit. The motion calls for DUSA and SRC endorsement and funding approval.

6.2 Adam clarified that the co-op is currently looking for an affordable building accommodating roughly 100 people which was estimated from guiding figures and advice from other housing co-ops.

6.3 The Chair asked councilors to vote on the motion. Obiozor announced the votes, 16 responses, 15 for and 1 disagreement. She announced the motion passed by the SRC.

7. Students views on GBV page on university website

7.1 The Chair introduced Matt Ward from student services to discuss the creation of a working group of representatives to change the culture of gender-based violence (GBV) at the university, starting with the university website working towards the Emilytest charter.

7.2 Jazmine voiced that they were keen to get involved as they raised that trans and non-binary people are often excluded in the conversation on GBV. Matt then said the university was actively encouraging accessibility of this work.

7.3 Andrea raised the issue of lack of visibility of what the official procedures are for raising cases of GBV. Matt then reinforced the idea that the aim of the working group would be to raise awareness, work together to change the culture, assessing the current GBV website page and evaluating other existing GBV university website pages.

7.4 Obiozor then shared a registration form for councilors interested in getting involved.

8. Additional Trustee Appointment Motion – Paper E

8.1 Obiozor briefly introduced this motion. Jazmine asked if Parissa or Eamonn had any reservations about these candidates. Eamonn said they were very humble candidates, he also highlighted that this was one of the definite powers of the SRC – getting to vote for or against additional trustees who ultimately have a huge say in how the association is governed. The Chair followed by saying that both were different but had a plethora of experience and recommended them both as suitable candidates on the board of trustees.

8.2 The Chair asked councilors to vote on the motion. Obiozor announced the votes, 16 responses, 12 for, 3 rejections and 1 abstention. She then announced the motion passed by the SRC.

**Standing Items**

9. Subcommittee update

9.1 Equality, Inclusion and Diversity: Bailey summarised; the trans and nonbinary swimming group went ahead, raised the issue and frustration of poor communication about this session from ISE as some students were turned away. ISE have committed to speaking to the staff involved, finding out what number of students were turned away and potentially running another session within the next month, if not then in April and at the beginning each semester to assess demand. They then updated on Audrye’s project idea of a cultural guide for incoming students and encouraged councillors to get involved.

9.2 On Campus: Louise summarised; Raised the issue of accessibility on campus, she spoke to Blair Grubb and he is going to update her about it. She is going to push for an apology to students effected given the unacceptable nature of the issue.

9.3 Education: Aaron summarised; Priya raised with Blair Grubb the inconsistencies of assessments particularly with postgraduates. He then encouraged councillors to invite class representatives to SRC meetings to show them what the SRC does. The Chair then asked School Presidents to send a school wide email inviting the class reps to future SRC meetings.

9.4 Engagement: Ayush summarised; this subcommittee has two current ideas one was the implementation of a feedback box to be placed in the DUSA building. Secondly, a diversity fair where everyone uses their culture to improve their engagement in the student community.

9.5 Scrutiny: Eamonn summarised; they discussed ways to improve DUSAs transparency, for example publishing board of trustee minutes similarly to other students' unions and associations. They want to increase SRC visibility by setting up stalls to encourage student engagement and inclusivity. Lastly, they discussed what powers the scrutiny committee has, for example, do they have access to financial reports, data on club nights and documents relating to revenue. They are interested in bringing a motion in support of this.

10. Exec Update – Questions

VPC, Jazmine summarised; they have been working on the housing co-op, conversations with humanities students continue and LGBT+ history month activities.

VPA, Zechariah summarised; one focus was the assessment policy review, and he stated that he would circulate this with members of the SRC. He also took this time to announce his resignation as VPA from Friday 24th of February 2023 to focus on his studies. He expressed his thanks for the opportunity to work with the representatives.

VPSA, Zining summarised; he was working briefly with Liam on the Enterprise Fayer, he then encouraged reps to come to DUSAs got talent and gave an updated on the Climate conference.

VPR, Obiozor summarised; gave a quick election update with nominations opening on the 6th – 22nd of March for DUSA executive, school presidents, Independent Member of Court and SRC chairperson. The voting period 24th – 30th of March with the election announcements on the 31st .

11. AOCB

- Shout out the Liam for the enterprise fair on the 1st of March

- School Presidents involvement in the SRC, with a possible introduction of a School President Subcommittee for better collaboration/ communication across the schools to make more effective change and encourage students to run for the role of SRC.

- Celebrating Representation Dinner 21st of March.