



**Education Committee**  
St Andrews Students Association

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**Meeting date:** Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2021 (6pm) MS Teams

**Apologies:** Brynne Stewart (SP of Biology), Kushal Tansania (Graduate SP)

**Present:** Georgina Beeby (Saints LGBT+) Amy Gallacher (DoEd), Chloe Fielding (Science and Medicine Faculty President), Joseph Horsnell (Arts and Divinity Faculty President), Iona Baillie (minuting)

Hannah Koegler (Art History SP), Pippa Koegler (Hannah's Cat), Kate Koegler (Hannah's Cat), Camiel Leake (Chemistry SP), Belinda Hawes (Earth Sciences SP), Callum Irvine (English SP), Teo Yarkova (Film Studies SP), Imaan Kotadia (Geography and SD SP), Geraint Morgan (History SP), Murray Whyte (Maths SP), Lucy Matthews (Modern Languages SP), Rachel Neighbour (Philosophy SP), Sarah Johnston (Physics and Astronomy SP), Lindsay Nielsen (Psychology and Neuroscience SP), Elinor Layne (Social Anthropology SP), Lowell So (Divinity SP), Emma Johnston (Arabic/Persian Convener), Maddie Lee (Comparative Literature Convener), Antonia Cahill (French Convener), Helen Clinton (Italian Convener), Elodie Phillips (Russian Convener), Rohan Date (Spanish Convener), Brynne Stewart (Biology SP), Eva Halliday (German Convener), George Watts (International Relations), Erwin Watts (George's Cat), Ursula Goldsmith (Music) Ryan Gibb (Computer Science SP), Erik Crnkovich (Classics SP), Orrin McAleer (Medicine SP)

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**AGENDA**

1. Welcome **5 mins**

(Art Div FP)

JH welcomed SPs to week 3 of Educom.

2. Careers Centre Collaboration **10 mins**

(DoSDA)

JH: The Dosda presentation for this will be next week.

### 3. LGBT Resources for Schools **10 mins**

(Film SP, LGBT President)

**TY:** Discussed previously with GB. Aware of Saints LGBT+ in the school, and were discussing ways SPs can spread more information to their LGBTQ+ students.

- **GB:** Open to anyone having ideas. Overwhelmingly, students want openness and proactivity of LGBT+ issues. A survey about how LGBT+ students feel about reporting problems to Student Services showed students didn't know Student Services were a good place to go for this. SPs could put it out there that if anyone is experiencing any kind of discrimination, they could use Report Support, linking resources to emails as well. One student said a question in the exam used 'he/she/they' which they liked as it was a small thing that went a long way to be inclusive of them. Making the first step to students who maybe don't engage with Saints LGBT+ etc.

**GM:** Sounds good. Regarding publicising places to go to for discrimination, his wellbeing poster which is sent out, has a point about where to go if you are facing discrimination but it doesn't specify types such as transphobia etc, but this can be added in the next version. Could Saints LGBT+ send them any education-focused events to publicised? SPs don't necessarily know about the events going on.

- **GB:** They have been talking about this, about engaging more with SPs etc. This sounds good so you'll hear from us. Also if you want to put on any events like this, get in touch and they can maybe help.
- **CF:** Re advertising, she and Anna-Ruth are putting together websites of where to go to for disability support, so maybe can collab with Saints LGBT+ to add specifics for LGBT?
- **GB:** Maybe link to their website.

*Action: CF to get in touch to talk about this.*

**SJ:** Correct terminology and wording to use can be confusing and intimidating so it would be really helpful if you could guide on how to write inclusively for publicity purposes.

- **GB:** Absolutely. Don't be too afraid as it is always contentious, even within the community. But will work with the committee, maybe as an opt-in, if there is demand for this. It might be useful for next year as well, eg in the handover documents. In handover documents, maybe make it clear that they can collaborate with Saints LGBT+, mention being inclusive etc.
- **AG:** IN CHAT: On the topic of staff issues and engagement, the pronoun guidance is in the final stages of approval and will be going to staff along with compulsory training sessions for teaching staff and tutors. Registry are looking for a way to facilitate and support student pronouns in tutorials.
- **LM:** IN CHAT: We're also in the process of creating documents to help with pronoun usage/inclusivity in foreign languages - may be useful for people who aren't native english speakers in other schools too!

*Action: GB to work on getting some terminology/ wording guidance out there.*

#### 4. Questions on Principal's email **10 mins**

(DoEd)

**AG:** Joined in a national campaign to get money from the government for refunds (to prevent staff having to be laid off if the money has to come from the University.)

#### 5. University guidance for reassessment in the case of failed modules **5 mins**

(Int Rels SP)

**GW:** In teaching committee this weekend (not fully discussed) they talked about the UG methods for reassessment. Currently, if someone fails any component of a module which has an exam, then reassessment is 100% exam. This doesn't seem fair as well as it is not in line with the module format and also the reason the student would fail is usually having lots of stuff going on. They thought changing this is a good idea but said it went against university policy.

- **SJ:** They have the opposite policy in Physics, all reassessment is oral which has been brought up for being strange in such a mathematical subject. So possibly there is not a universal policy on this.
- **EL:** On the Social Anthropology catalogue, Honours modules reassessment is very variable, some are reflective of the initial split between coursework

and exams but others aren't. It would be good to have consistency so you're reassessed on what you initially would have been assessed on.

- **AG:** It's awkward as schools are autonomous. Policy is determined by TAG for each school. So the inconsistency is because different schools have decided that their reassessment policy is appropriate. Maybe there should be some information gathered to further discuss this. It probably also comes to minimising staff workload. TAG, a policy officer, Amy and any people interested in this should meet.

*Action: AG to set up a meeting after potentially having a data gathering drive.*

## 6. School President politicisation issue **10 mins**

(Int Rels SP)

**GW:** Anonymous SPs and University representatives have got in touch re the sacking of Dr Alison Kerr. Essentially, it's odd that SPs aren't allowed to say what they think. We're told we're elected and can say what we like in emails, we're allowed to adamantly disagree with staff in meetings etc. So its frustrating that then we cant speak about an issue this important to the University which is so political. Because we also don't get a say in what the Union decides. We understand that these big issues have work/meetings going on behind the scenes, but its frustrating that you cant represent the student vote on this. IR students are angry about this and it is a time sensitive issue. Cant wait a long time to send out a petition if we're eventually allowed to do that.

- **JH:** Separating this into the wider system and then the current issue. Councils is made up of students such as the SAABs, one does representation and one does services.
- **GM:** It is understandable we're not involved when Councils are talking about non-education related topics. But when issues are educational, SPs still aren't engaged in Councils. It seems unfair Educom cant have its own cohesive separate opinion, and that we are responsible to follow a cabinet we're not involved in.
- **SJ:** The reason we're not supposed to say things outwith the Union's opinion is because we have the access to mailing lists which gives us huge access. In which case voicing personal opinions (outwith your role as an SP) is allowed. Is this correct?
- **JH:** Yes.

- **GW:** True, voicing an opinion as a person (eg on the strikes) is allowed but the fact that saying it as an SP is not allowed is bad.
- **JH:** Will discuss this with Dan. There might be room to do something about this; eg motions relating to education could be brought to Educom and then taken back to Councils after discussion/voting. Re not being able to voice opinions via the mailing lists, not syre anything can be done about this.
- **AG:** Good suggestion. Councils are in review so this is the time to suggest changes to the system. It is frustrating.

*Action: AG/JH to speak to Dan about way-arounds.*

- **CF:** If we brought an item to Educom and made a consensus, but Councils could still outvote them. No point bringing these things to Educom just to be discounted. It would be a waste of everyone's time, so it's worth bearing in mind.
- **JH:** This is the problem: Councils are more powerful than Educom.
- **CI:** Is there anything against us saying 'Educom endorses this' for items about education?
- **JH:** Probably not, will ask Dan.
- **AG:** Don't know, will follow up.

*Action: JH/AG to follow this up with Dan.*

- **SJ:** Can we say impartially signpost students to see what is going on?
- **AG:** Maybe invite Dan to Educom to talk about this and asking questions.

*Action: JH to talk to Dan and Morgan to see what the laws allow.*

(Addressing the specific issue)

**AG:** Difficult and ongoing, it makes matters more complicated that it is going through the complaints process. If you want to share the petition, you can do this through your personal account but not your SP account. Please hold on for a little bit in order to allow things to happen behind the scenes.

**JH:** Difficult. If all SPs share this, it prevents us from protecting the students as it shifts the issue from their learning away to recruitment which is also important but not their remit. There will be a meeting afterwards.

- **GW:** Understood, but also the Union's apolitical stance on strikes last year allowed mediators (as intended) but did this really help? What has neutrality

done to help in the past? Unless there's a specific reason, it seems like a way to pacify not help.

- **JH:** The problem is that it affects individual students who have had their education disrupted. Mounting a campaign may not affect those students.
- **AG:** Holding off for now means we can leverage for what the students want. Focus on students and then the complaint should be handled in that channel.
- **JH:** Will keep you up to date with updates.

7. Joe's roundup of stuff he's doing and you might like to know about **5 mins**  
(Art Div FP)

**JH:** Thanked SPs for the support in publicising the study buddy scheme. It got huge numbers signing up and they continued after the main drive. Will continue signups throughout the semester. SPAG was yesterday and talked about a guide for handover documents wrt the Careers side of things.

8. AOCB

**SJ:** In week 1, brought up EDI wording on recruitment documents. HR have approved their different wording and the head of HR was enthusiastic, so if anyone else wants to do this, HR have time and drive to do this for other schools. Also, SJ can supply the Physics changes. Will post on the group. Also, been pitching for a wellbeing tracker and there is a pot of money the Union has access to, so Dan is going to take the idea of a wellbeing tracker forward. Would people think this is a good use of funding?

*Action: SJ to post the Physics wording and the poll (see below).*

- **JH:** Email Sarah with feedback. Also put a poll in the group for which students want to take EDI rewording forward.
- (General approval)
- **CL:** Been testing some of these apps, but most have notifications every day if you forget to input your stats and this is annoying.
- **JH:** Hopefully you can turn them off.

**SJ:** RAG week is next week and it will be fun. Please can people encourage students to get involved? Lots of things to look forward to such as games, tshirts, baking.

**GM:** Was a post on the group about moving emails onto office 365. His emails are already on 365 so confusion.

- **JH:** For those with gmail, they'll be switched to 365.
- **TY:** Managed to link president gmail to 365 email account, so people can do this as well.
- **GW:** Does all work on google docs for SPs have to be moved?
- **JH:** Yes
- **AG:** The documents can be moved from docs to Onedrive but still back up your documents.

**EL:** Re nominations and elections. Is it correct that we shouldn't endorse our replacement? Can there be clarifications on what we can like and share on Facebook?

- **JH:** There's 11 days until nominations start. Probably don't like or share anything from any candidate.

*Action: JH to post rules in Facebook.*

- **GW:** Can we like candidates for other SP roles?
- **JH:** Can endorse as long as it isn't for your position.
- **TY:** Are we allowed to encourage people to put themselves forward for elections on the SP emails?
- **JH:** Yes
- **GW:** Is it allowed to nudge someone to be an SP that you are right now?
- **JH:** Yes as it is anonymous.
- **HK:** Will there be an official email blast coming up or should we put in weekly emails?
- **JH:** Yes there will be but still put it in your emails.
- **MW:** Are SPs in charge of doing hustings? Do we make up the questions?
- **JH:** Yes, SPs are, but elections committee will send out questions and then you'll send them to the candidates, and then on to the students. Elections Committee do it for you if you are running.
- **AC:** Can conveners endorse a ModLang candidate?
- **JH:** Maybe yes but will check.
- **CL:** You can personally but not officially as an SP.

**BH:** A lot of students who can come back for in person teaching are ES students and they may have to come from overseas and quarantine in a hotel at their own expense. Is there anything that can be done about this?

- **AG:** Get them in touch with the DOT and they will probably be able to access funding for this.

**MW:** A class rep got an email relating to a PG café event, asking how many PGT students there are in the school in St Andrews. Is that information the University has on hand?

**AG:** The university is struggling to gage this. Get in touch with Registry and your DOT. Registry might have better information than DOT.

9. Meeting adjourned 7pm