



Education Committee
St Andrews Students Association

Meeting date: Thursday 18th February 2021 (6pm) MS Teams

Apologies: Jeanne Adam (Management SP)

Present: Amy Gallacher (DoEd), Joseph Horsnell (Arts and Divinity Faculty President), Chloe Fielding (Science and Medicine Faculty President), Iona Baillie (minuting), Gavin Sandford (DoSDA), Sophie Tyler (Elections)

Hannah Koegler (Art History SP), 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), Orrin McAleer (Medicine 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 Convenor), Kushal Tansania (Graduate SP), George Watts (International Relations), Ursula Goldsmith (Music) Ryan Gibb (Computer Science SP), Erik Crnkovich (Classics SP)

AGENDA

1. Introduction (Sci/Med FP – 5 mins)

CF welcomed everyone to Educom.

2. Careers Week (DoSDA – 10 mins)

GS: Will work with careers centre. Document shared lays out situation (Career's Centre runs events, SPs run events, working together will improve these).

- **GW:** Talked about in SPAG and Craig wanted to reassure students that the independent services exist, it's not completely events based. It would be good to have more information on the other services they provide.
- **GS:** Good feedback.
- **SJ:** Is this a week event or an initiative in general?
- **GS:** This is an initiative launched as a part of career's week.
- **JH:** This is a semester long collaboration between the Union and the Career's Centre, to address the lack of awareness about the Career's Centre. It will help engagement and signposting as more people are engaged with the Union than the Career's Centre, currently.
- **GS:** There is an events calendar being set up. It should be easy to add events to it, similar to the general events calendar.
- **AG:** This is part of a bigger initiative to develop better ties with the Career's Centre. It has been spread from one week to a semester.
- **GW:** All this information is going to be on the website – is this going to replace existing information places? There are so many avenues the Career's Centre communicate on which is confusing. Is it putting the information in one place or replacing something else.
- **GS:** It is not replacing anything, it is a way to highlight what works (ie a simpler service with less places to look) and is a new service.
- **JH:** It will hopefully show in the long-term that the Career's Centre should streamline all the 'Connects'. Message Gavin if you have any feedback.

3. Opportunity to ask Elections questions (AU President – 10 mins)

IK: If someone asks you to help them with their SABB campaign, can you help as an SP (if you're not running for that position).

- **ST:** You can as long as you don't say it as an SP. Only personal, don't mention your role in the post (etc).

SJ: Are their limits on what we can do in our roles in elections week. For example, running lots of events might look like you're campaigning for yourself.

- **ST:** No. If you're running for a different position, be wary that you're doing the same amount of events etc as usual. Just do what you normally would do, even if that includes preplanned events.

GW: Not planning on running, but if you put on more events wouldn't it be negative press if someone else running accused you of this.

- **ST:** It's only against the rules to use your position to campaign.

SR: I have an event which is planned, is that ok? Re hustings, how does that work if you rerun?

- **ST:** Email Emma (DoWell) or SAelect and they will send out the hustings, not you.

IK: People like using stickers on profile pictures. Can I use this? I use my personal Facebook for SP business.

- **ST:** Will check, maybe not.

ST to check this.

SR: Last year, when you nominate yourself, you can share it on your timeline but people got in trouble for people commenting on the posts. Would you be responsible if someone comments on if someone else shares it first?

- **ST:** Constant posting is stressful for entrants so this year, at the end of the day, the elections office will put up a graphic poster instead. Then you can share that. You are responsible for people commenting on the post but the rules have changed so will double check. If needed, well ask you to take it down, nothing more, so it shouldn't be a stressful outcome wither way.

ST to check this.

- **ST:** If you're rerunning there will be a virtual elections office you can ask questions to.

4. Gender Studies Updates (DoEd – 10 mins)

AG: Met with the student cohort involved and that was the only university contact they had had. Part of the issue is regarding an ongoing complaint which prevents staff from speaking to students. Coordinated a meeting with the Director of the Graduate School to talk about how best to support students through the semester and summer projects. Education Advocate is helping support them with the complaint. Agreed with Grad School to progress an ongoing discussion regarding rep engagement, staff contracts etc. Agreed to keep an eye on the student situation.

JH: First councils point is about this issue. Shared the motion they are planning to put forward. Educom is bound by rules dictated at Councils so we are bringing things to Educom to discuss now. A mini debate about the motion would be good and then a vote. If it passes it will go to councils with Educom approval.

It expresses dismay at treatment of students. It doesn't explicitly condemn the individual case due to legality.

- **GM:** Overall it is good. It is easy to support the institution fictionally so maybe add 'meaningful existence' to make it more stronger and more binding.

- **JH:** We thought about this, which is why we added a line at the end about leave of absences to try and make it so anyone returning comes back to a comparable department and level of education.
- **GW:** Already had a lot of this discussion. Expressing frustration that you can't condemn what is going on, but acknowledging that this can't be put in the motion. It is very complicated but it is frustrating that in order to be able to support a particular group of students, the SA isn't able to say 'this is what students think'. Saying this has repercussions, of course, but it is still frustrating that we can't have an outward opinion or freer speech. Frustration that dissent against the University isn't allowed. Understand interpretation of 'the institute continuing' but the University surely can say it does exist. Unless it says exactly what it means it can be a bit tokenistic.
- **JH:** Important to point out, it is not a motion that binds the University to do anything but that is the reality of the SA. It won't be possible to bind the university in this way. The point about dissent on campus is not completely backed up as students have signed the support letter and we've put in the motion that students are unhappy, this motion in itself is proof of dissent.

RN: If this goes through can I reach out to gender studies students or does it just express that we want to?

- **AG:** Part of the issue is that the Graduate School does not line manage staff members involved so there isn't one avenue we can follow to address the issue in full however both schools will need to be part of the discussion, so yes.
- **RN:** I don't know if my emails go to Gender Studies students as never told Gender Studies was within their school.
- **AG:** That needs to be explored. Director of Graduate school said Graduate School students in the past got mails from schools they didn't identify with. Will take this forward with IT services.

AG to look into this with IT services.

JH: Sorry if this discussion is distant to most SPs but it ties as students from most schools will have signed the petition. By you voting on this issue you are still representing those students.

CF: Does anyone object to the motion as it currently is? Agreed. Motion passes in Educom.

- **JH:** Thank you.

5. Councils update (Arts/Div FP – 10 mins)

JH: Re frustration about being bound by councils, went to the SA Executive committee so were going to put a standing order in the rules that it is only education that you can't share opposing views on. It will still be regulated but it will be more free. Will be a document going to successors to talk about the rules.

6. Mentoring update (Arts/Div FP – 5 mins)

JH: CF and I had meetings with CEED about the mentoring scheme for incoming students as SPs are sad it is not devolved anymore. Compromise: a CR will be responsible for doing mentoring scheme with you. Brings it slightly closer to SPs. Moving slightly which is good news. Asked to asked you guys if you think a 'transition to honours' mentorship between 2nd and 3rd years would be a good idea.

- **BS:** CR system – don't they recruit in July way before CRs are elected?
- **JH:** Would be given role in September and then be in charge until the beginning of the next year's scheme with training ongoing throughout the year.
- **CL:** What does that mean for the buddy scheme next year.
- **JH:** There is a distinction between mentoring and buddy scheme. Former is when students are coming to St Andrews for the first time and the latter is FP run and separate. CR champion would run events and recruit the mentors.
- **GW:** Transition to honours would be a good idea but having so many mentoring schemes might be very confusing. Also the remit would need to be clear as in arts subjects you need the specificity of areas of your subject which diversified into hons. Hons fayres are hard to get running. If we put this in, faculty engagement might go down.
- **JH:** The specifics are way in the future. But both points are valid.
- **EL:** Good idea, did something similar informally and it was successful. Would this be something you sign up for the summer before hons and then you get paired with an incoming 4th year, and then also would the mentoring CR be an expansion pack role?
- **JH:** Yes to second point. Incoming freshers would be paired with 2nd years. Transition to honours would be 3rd or maybe 4th years (if needed) paired to 2nd years at the end of that year ie going into hons with the mentor.
- **SJ:** We have this in physics and it works, paired in July. An elected student (not a CR) does this. I would support this but make it clear it's for the transition not the whole of second year. Having a rep for mentoring is great – it could just be a person not an CR there are advantages to finding someone out of CR pool.
- **JH:** We thought of using CRs to bring it closer to SP but you probably could co-opt a student as long as they worked with the CR team.

- **BS:** Is CEED still going to do the matching? What does the champion do.
- **JH:** Yes. And the champion would help recruitment, inform the SP on numbers, run school specific events for people on the scheme etc.

7. Outlook Privacy (Maths SP – 5 mins)

MW: If you're on Office 365 on a browser you can look up anyone in the university and find a profile and a whole list of people they commonly email, this is a bit of an intrusion of privacy eg if someone is in touch with Student Services or nightline a lot. What's the point? Could this be removed?

- **MW** did a demo. Must be a default which has been left turned on. Can we turn it off?
- **CF:** It could be problematic.
- **GW:** This is bad. Also, don't publicise this issue as we are fixing it, as we don't want people to be aware of it.
- **MW:** Agreed

AG to pick this up with IT.

8. AOCB

SJ: Thank you to everyone who shared RAG week, it's going well with £1800 so far!