

University of St Andrews Students' Association

Education Committee

17 November 2014, 6pm, Students' Association Committee Room

MINUTES

Present: Ondrej Hajda (Director of Representation), Darya Smirnova (SRC Education Officer), Charlotte Potter (Arts/Divinity Faculty President), Katy Rae (Science/Medicine Faculty President), Hannah Chinn (Art History), Louise Cameron (Biology), Rhiann Ferguson (Chemistry), Maxwell Fabiszewski (Classics), Alexey Sazonov (Computer Science), Alex Taylor (Divinity), Oliver Harrison (Economics & Finance), Hannah Smith (English), Marcin Kupiecki (Film Studies), George King (Geography & Sustainable Development), Yeung Cheung (Management), Kelly Johnston (Mathematics & Statistics), Dawnn Khoo (Medicine), Janine Gallagher (Modern Languages), Louise McCaul (Physics & Astronomy), Danielle Polemeni-Hegarty (Social Anthropology).

Apologies: Katy Relph (Earth & Environmental Sciences). Ainikki Riikonen (International Relations)

1 Reports from Education Committee

The meeting started with reports from School Presidents; many of which featured successful employability events organized by the School Presidents and Class Reps.

Charlotte announced that she was looking for two volunteers to help her with organization of event in April about successful women in academia (and beyond).

Katy reminded everyone that the Education Committee Christmas Lunch would be happening on 29 November from 1.30pm.

2 Matters arising

a) UCU setting & marking boycott

Ondrej asked for feedback on the UCU setting & marking from students. The boycott received some negative feedback in Schools but some students also supported the boycott. School Presidents should pass any feedback from students to Ondrej on dorep@.

It was stressed that lecturers taking part in this boycott should not withhold feedback from student because feedback could be given to students even without revealing the official grade. Students were reminded to contact ucu@ if there were individual problems with lecturing refusing to provide feedback to students.

Katy Rae explained that the SRC would be discussing the official position of the Students' Association at the next SRC meeting on 18 November.

The UCU Higher Education Committee would be discussing the possibility of suspending the setting & marking boycott on 19 November after a promising round of negotiations with Universities UK. Ondrej promised to keep the Education Committee informed about the UCU decision.

b) The role of School President

Ondrej thanked everyone who filled in the School Presidents' Survey. The following recommendations were agreed as the result of the survey:

- Ondrej to create a School President role description with expected time commitment.
- School Presidents to create handover documents for their successor (Ondrej, Charlotte, and Katy to provide guidelines).
- Newly elected School Presidents to shadow incumbent School Presidents at important meetings in April and May (SSCC, LTC, Education Committee).
- Ondrej to include School President reports at the beginning of each Education Committee.

School Presidents were reminded that their term of office is for an entire academic year (June-May).

It was also agreed that there should be a pre-summer training session for all newly elected School Presidents and that academic staff should receive more information about the role of School Presidents.

Action: Ondrej to create a School Presidents role description.

Action: School Presidents to start writing handover documents for their successors.

4 Closing feedback loop

Charlotte explained that it was important to close the feedback loop and inform students what was being done as a result of their feedback. There were the following recommendations:

- Publish all SSCC minutes online and circulate them to students.
- Include all SSCC & LTC minutes and agenda in the handover pack.
- Send all approved SSCC minutes to the Director of Representation.
- Inform academic staff about issues from SSCC meetings by including a student report at every LTC or School Council.
- Create a "you said, we did" system for student feedback.
- Create an FAQ sheet with most commonly asked questions from students.

5 Report from feedback focus groups

Maxwell informed the Education Committee that the feedback focus groups were nearly finished. He would be collating all the information and writing a report over winter holiday.

Action: Maxwell to write a report from the feedback focus groups and send it to Ondrej by the beginning of Semester 2.

6 JF Allen Library Opening Hours

Dawn expressed interest in having the JF Allen Library open on weekends. Ondrej explained that he had been trying to work with the Library staff to open the JF Allen Library on weekend but it had not been seen as a priority given the opening of the new Gateway study space.

Ondrej suggested that the Science and Medicine School Presidents should collect evidence on student demand and submit it to the Library and School of Physics & Astronomy. Hannah Smith recommended targeting Science students who were also a member of sport club because they often tended to work in the North Haugh area.

Ondrej informed that any Science/Medicine student with access issues to the JF Allen Library 5-9pm on weekdays should immediately email library@ and idcards@.

Action: Ondrej to create a petition for opening the JF Allen Library on weekends and distribute to Science School Presidents.

Katy Rae suggested that School Presidents could contact School Secretaries to book study rooms for students in their respective Schools and advertise these additional study spaces to all students within the School.

Action: School Presidents to book study rooms in their Schools for revision and exam period and advertise them together with the Students' Association list of alternative study spaces on yourunion.net/studyspaces.

7 Addressing staff

Kelly explained that some students in the School of Mathematics & Statistics did not address staff correctly. While the practices varied among Schools, it was felt that this was an issue in some other Schools as well. It was suggested that there should be a section on addressing staff in each School handbook.

It was also agreed that lectures should introduce themselves at the beginning of their first lecture and also state how they would like to be addressed by students.

8 AOCB

a) Module Evaluation Questionnaires Online

Ondrej informed the Education Committee that the launch of the online module evaluation questionnaires via MMS had been delayed but the issue would be resolved by 18 November. He asked for help from School Presidents with encouraging students to fill in the feedback forms because a good response rate was critical to the success of the project.

b) Laidlaw Research and Leadership Internships

Ondrej informed that the University would be launching a new research & leadership summer internship programme for penultimate year students and that more information would follow in Week 11. School Presidents were asked to help with publicity of the internship programme. It was suggested that an information event should be organized following the launch of the scheme.

c) Semester 2 Meetings – all in the Students’ Association Committee Room

Education Committee (6-7pm)	2 February
	16 February
	9 March
	6 April
	20 April
School Presidents' Forum (5.15-6.45pm)	23 February
	30 March