



**Education Committee**  
St Andrews Students Association

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**Meeting date:** Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2020 (6pm) MS Teams

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**MINUTES**

**Present:**

Amy Gallacher (DoEd), Joseph Horsnell (Arts and Divinity Faculty President), Chloe Fielding (Science and Medicine Faculty President), Abi Whitefield (Postgraduate Academic Convenor)

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), Murray Whyte (Maths SP), Lucy Matthews (Modern Languages SP), Ursula Goldsmith (Music SP), Rachel Neighbour (Philosophy SP), Sarah Johnston (Physics and Astronomy SP), Lindsay Nielsen (Psychology and Neuroscience SP), Elinor Layne (Social Anthropology SP), Erik Crnkovich (Classics SP), Lowell So (Divinity SP), Brynne Stewart (Biology SP), George Watts (International Relations SP), Kushal Tansania (Graduate SP)

Emma Johnston (Arabic/Persian Convenor), Maddie Lee (Comparative Literature Convenor), Antonia Cahill (French Convenor), Helen Clinton (Italian Convenor), Elodie Phillips (Russian Convenor), Rohan Date (Spanish Convenor), Eva Halliday (German Convenor)

**Absent with apologies:** Ryan Gibb (Computer Science SP), Geraint Morgan (History SP)

**Absent without apologies:** Orrin McAleer (Medicine SP)

**Joe:** Well done for making it through nine EduComs!!

### Joe – Careers

- New advisors in Careers Centre
  - o Schools will have a school-specific advisor (woo)
  - o They should hopefully give SPs and Convenors a lot more support
- Revision week events
  - o Check Career Connect calendar
  - o **ACTION:** SPs and Convenors to check for events that apply to their Schools
- Other workshops
  - o Psychometric tests etc
  - o In response to feedback from careers reps
- Careers report
  - o **ACTION:** Joe to put this in the Team
  - o Joe will email SPs and Convenors when it is ready
- You ask, we did function
  - o To be put on Careers website
  - o Helps with the feedback loop
- DoSDA, Amy and Joe are working on careers and employability principles
  - o What are the themes we want to focus on?
  - o Need thoughts from SPs and Convenors
  - o **Murray:** Events in 601 were quite enjoyable and useful (i.e. the careers fayres)
  - o **George:** Underrepresented careers should be pushed too (big firms already have enough people to promote them). The University should help firms that have less money and people don't know about
  - o **Teo:** School-specific events might be quite good. Also, advertise opportunities for arts students
  - o **Brynne:** Have things other than data analysis and don't just relate the whole of STEM to data analysis
  - o **Sarah:** Again, wants things to be specific. Investment banking isn't for everyone. Would also be good to see the University promoting accessible employers, or employers that are interested in the environment etc.
  - o The University needs to better understand what is important to students
  - o **Sanjana:** Some of the major firms don't come here (e.g. JP Morgan). Econ needs these kinds of things for their careers. The big banks and consulting firms tend to recruit from other Universities
  - o **Immy:** Staff often prioritise academia over big companies
  - o **Sanjana:** Econ also has a big focus on research
  - o **Amy:** Do students engage with weekly emails from the Careers Centre?
    - General consensus: no
    - Emails are unappealing
    - Relevant sections could be helpful – either arts/science or split into career types
    - They need to send fewer emails each week
  - o **Rachel:** Students think careers events are not useful

- **Antonia:** Fifteen-minute appointments are well-advertised, but they just fob you off. They should have a list of things that you should do before that appointment (e.g. in a PDF)
- **Jeanne:** Also found the fifteen-minute appointments boring and useless. Hiring more people might make it better.
- **Rachel:** Students start feeling like they're being put in careers boxes early on
- New elected position on employability
  - **Sarah:** Most students that aren't involved in representation don't care about councils, so students might not engage with the officer. We might need two positions; one for arts and one for science. Are these people becoming an unpaid careers officer? Having a personal touch with careers is good
  - **Joe:** Employability Officer would advocate on behalf of SPs and Convenors to the careers centre
  - **Callum:** This position could keep the careers centre accountable. If there is no FP who is interested in careers, then things could go downhill in the current system
  - **Teo:** Takes pressure off FPs and SPs and Convenors to think about careers at a more advanced level
  - **Erik:** Agrees with Sarah. It might be better to affirm the roles of the FPs

### Immy – Extensions

- Had a conversation with DoT about extensions and they said it is hard to give extensions because of staff marking deadlines (i.e. it means that staff having to work over Christmas)
- Brought this up in the Sci/Med meeting
- Difficulty getting extensions in relation to mental health or COVID
- Students are often sent to Student Services to get advice
- Students aren't asking for a mental health assessment; they're asking for an extension
- Immy is getting a lot of feedback from students about this
- Extension requests go through the School secretary
- **Brynne:** Biology doesn't require Student Services appointment for extensions and this is a good thing. Self-certifications can get abused sometimes, but this is better than people struggling
- **Rachel:** In Philosophy, it is usually easy to get extensions. There is a form to fill out and send to secretary / module coordinator. Students usually get an extension if they want one. It seems unnecessary not to be kind to students.
- **Teo:** In Film Studies, you can just email you module coordinator and you can ask more than once for extensions
- **Sarah:** Me and Callum are working on this via SWAG. We are working on a uniform extension policy. Doesn't understand why a uniform policy doesn't exist.

- **Callum:** DoT said that students should feel lucky that Schools don't ask for medical evidence. Extensions should be lenient and students should be able to ask for one when they are not feeling well. Students are emailing Callum about this issue regularly
- **Jeanne:** Management does this on a personal basis with your lecturer. It is about communicating with the lecturer to ask for an extension. If you are struggling beforehand and then you reach out (not within 48 hours), then this works well
- **Immy:** Menstrual cycles should be included and taken seriously in extension requests
- **Belinda:** Geology won't give out marks or feedback until three weeks after the deadline (and extensions then delay this). This affects everyone else
- **Immy:** One uniform policy would be beneficial because the current system is not fair. There should be one person to deal with extensions (e.g. the module coordinator). The School secretary isn't the best person. People don't schedule their breakdowns
- **ACTION:** Amy is querying the extension policy tonight with Frank

#### Joe – End of Semester Report

- Examples from last year have been put in the Team
- Guidance is in the Team too
- **Deadline: end of the first week back after the break**
- Should be detailed, but not really long (find a happy medium)
- **Camiel:** Who do the reports get sent to?
  - o Reports go on the website
  - o Reports might get shared with academic staff
  - o SPs and Convenors will submit through a Google form

#### Joe – Study Buddy Scheme

- **ACTION:** SPs and Convenors asked to push the scheme
- 117 students signed up as of today
- List of Schools that need to be pushed tomorrow:
  - o CompSci: too few people signing up
  - o Divinity: one more PGT needed
  - o Earth Sci, Geog/SD, IR, Philosophy, Soc Anth, Management need to push the scheme a bit more
  - o Grad School, History, ModLangs – one PGT student
- It is good to push the scheme via email and social media
- Other Schools have had sizeable numbers – enough in each year groups
- Physics had 25 sign-ups
- **Belinda:** People already know other people in their year, so Geology students might not sign up. Some year groups are really small
- All pairings will happen at the weekend

All – SPF Discussion (Pre-meetings and Different Tone)

- **Sarah:** likes the pre-SPF discussions because it's nice to know what other SPs and Convenors are going to say. All SPs and Convenors need to know what's going to be said so they can be a unified front. Splitting into Sci/Arts sometimes doesn't work because it's good to know what all SPs and Convenors think and not just those in your Faculty.

**ACTION:** Please push the MEQs

- Some DoTs haven't got the email about MEQs
- Emails went to the Athletic Union President instead of the DoEd
- It's in students' best interest to complete these surveys

**Sarah:** Thanked the DoEd and Faculty Presidents

**All SPs and Convenors have done an amazing job this semester!**

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Meeting adjourned at 6:55pm