



University of St Andrews
Students' Association
Students' Representative Council
Student Services Council

MINUTES

Tuesday 15 September 2015 - Committee Room - 6pm

Present

Member's Name	Position
Eleanor Mullin	Arts/Divinity Faculty President
Charlotte Andrews	Association Alumni Officer
Zara Evans	Association Chair
Clare Armstrong	Association Community Relations Officer
Chris MacRae	Association Director of Events and Services
Joe Tantillo	Association Director of Representation
Kyle Blain	Association Director of Student Development and Activities
Alice Pickthall	Association Environment and Ethics Officer
Sigrid Jorgensen	Association LGBT Officer
Pat Mathewson	Association President
Sarah Thompson	President of the Athletic Union
Annie Newman	Rector's Assessor
Louise McCaul	Science/Medicine Faculty President
Alexandre Ciric	SRC Accommodation Officer
Omar Ali	SRC Equal Opportunities Officer
Nils Turner	SRC Employability Officer
Toby Emerson	SRC External Campaigns Officer

Jackie Ashkin	SRC Member for Racial Equality
Holly Johnston	SRC Member for First Years
Alice Lecointe	SRC Member for Gender Equality
Adam Stromme	SRC Member for International Students
Aysha Marty	SRC Member for Mature Students
Kate Mayer	SRC Member for Students with Disabilities
Tania Struetzel	SRC Postgraduate Convenor
Miriam Chappell	SRC Welfare Officer
Bruce Kerr	SSC Broadcasting Officer
Amy Christison	SSC Charities Officer
Alyssa Muzyk	SSC Debates Officer
Karla McDougall	SSC Design Team Convener
Lavin Ge Tian	SSC Entertainments Convenor
Tierney Riordan	SSC External Funding Officer
Annabel Romanos	SSC Member without Portfolio
Ipek Ozsoy	SSC Music Officer
Jo Bowman	SSC Performing Arts Officer
Aline Heyerick	SSC Postgraduate Officer
Robert Dixon	SSC Societies Officer
Julian Valladares Urruela	SSC Volunteering Officer

In Attendance

Iain Cupples	Education Advocate
Ilaria Gidoro	Education and Representation Coordinator (Minutes)
Courtney Lewis	Ex Societies Officer
Joseph Cassidy	The Saint

Absent

Nicola Kennedy	Principal Ambassador
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1. Adoption of the Agenda

The agenda was adopted without dissent.

2. Apologies for Absence

Member's Name	Position	Reason
None		

3. Reports of the Sabbatical Officers

3.1 Report of the Association President

Mr Mathewson thanked everyone for the work they had done so far. He informed that the 'Save the Rector' petition got 4000 signatures so far and received attention at a national level. He reminded about the upcoming selection process for the Principal and about the major discussion that is happening on the housing situation.

3.2 Report of the Association Director of Events & Services

Mr MacRae stated that Freshers' Week went well, also thanks to the new building. There were six sell-out events. The normal events calendar was starting, which included club night in 601 on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. He informed that they were starting to look for PRs to advertise events and the job description was going out in the near future.

3.3. Report of the Association Director of Student Development & Activities

Mr Blain confirmed that the Freshers' Fayre went well and was double the size as ever before. He asked for comments or suggestions on the Fayre. He reported that Association Projects would be removed and that there would be £6500 available for projects. He reminded everybody of the online room booking system for the Sabbs and officers, and informed that others would need to refer to Chris at the welcome desk to book rooms. Mr Blain also informed that they were going to launch a new recognition system for the hours spent by students for volunteering activities. This would also go on the final transcript if a student volunteered for more than 350 or 400 hours.

3.4. Report of the Association Director of Representation

Mr Tantillo asked the attendees to advertise the new online training module on equality and diversity, which includes topic such as harassment, bullying and inclusion. He also informed that the amount of sexual health clinics was increased and that there were more resources provided by NHS Fife. They also introduced wellbeing advisors from Student Services for UG and PGT students. The StAnd Together campaign on sexual consent was proceeding well and received very good response, and Mr Tantillo suggested interested people contact Ms Lecointe for training. Class reps nominations are open, with 350+ spots to fill. Mr Tantillo asked attendees to change their cover pictures on Facebook to advertise it and to encourage student to run.

Action: All to advertise the new training module and class reps nominations

3.5 Report of the President of the Athletic Union

Ms Thompson confirmed that Freshers' Week went well. She informed that there was going to be a rugby match in the Murrayfield Stadium in Edinburgh and that students could register for £5 tickets that included the bus journey.

4. New General Joint Business

4.1. J.15-12 Petition to the Elections Committee for Open Elections for All Students J.15-12

We, the undersigned, believe in the three basic principles approved by joint councils, the first of which is this: that our elections should be open to all students on an equal basis.

The legislation recently passed ensures that we no longer "foster an...inclusive community". Our stated values that are "democratic, [where] every student is eligible to... stand for election" and wholly "Inclusive" with a commitment to equal opportunities are not only threatened by this motion but are an utterly extirpated, standing in direct conflict with the beliefs that form the heart of our Association.

If we value being democratic, then why are we restricting the way that students vote? We believe in giving students the ability to decide for themselves who they elect to office, and placing limitations on who can and cannot stand for election fundamentally violates our democratic right to self-determination.

We have created an Association that holds three main areas at its core: representation, activities, and places/facilities. Our strategic plan states that "it is vital that we offer the best possible service", but we cannot possibly offer the best possible service if we bar our most experienced and knowledgeable students from running in elections. In our Students' Association, it is the "fantastic work carried out by our students" which allows it and us to "improve and grow" and to create an institution "where all students are involved and supported".

Our Association promises to uphold a "student-led and student-run philosophy of democratic engagement" which we believe is violated by recent legislation. Our Association also believes that our "outstanding accomplishments are only achieved through the ambition, talent, and hard work of our amazing students who volunteer their time and abilities year on year to plan, organise, and work towards an even better Association". It is our understanding that the largest contributions made to student life are best achieved through due diligence and careful planning, and these contributions may take years of development and require continuity in order to be brought to fruition. Again, we believe that this legislation fundamentally inhibits the largest and most ambitious contributions to student life which serves us, as students, the most benefit.

Beyond violating our democratic right to choose our officers, we have forsaken our dedication and commitment to equal opportunities. Our Laws state that our Association ensures that "all individuals...will not be subjected to unfair discrimination in any respect of the Association's activities" and that we will "not tolerate unfair discrimination on any grounds" and that these grounds shall include "union activity". When these principles are abandoned, our own Laws require that we "campaign against discrimination" on these very grounds. We expect our members and societies to adhere to these rules, so why not our elected officials and the bodies they sit on? The regulation passed in recent days is nothing short of discrimination.

How can we be "inclusive" and free from discrimination when we segregate our most dedicated students from running for election? How can we be "democratic" when we are stripped of our ability to choose our officers for ourselves?

The councils have delegated authority to the Elections Committee, which shall have the power to make changes to the Rules and Regulations for the 2015 elections. We urge the

elections committee to see the inherent reason in our argument and completely reverse this legislation immediately.

As such, we, the undersigned, petition the Elections Committee to strike §1.3.6 of Chapter Six of the Laws to allow for any student to be elected to any position and to consider and hold a vote on this motion within 24 hours of reception and advertise accordingly.

***Please note that the public copy of the Laws (linked below) is out of date. Chapter 6 (as indicated above) has been re-written and is included in the "legislation" link (motion J 15-8, p. 14). The amendment in question may be found on p. 31 of the legislation link. Unless otherwise stated, the quotes above are taken directly from the Strategic Plan which includes the Students' Association's Mission Statement, Values, and Goals (as well as an introduction from the President and Chair of the Board).

At the current point in time (24 February 2015, 8pm), no copy of the minutes of the meetings of either Council are electronically available.

For a copy of the Strategic Plan, click here: <http://bit.ly/1yUy6n4>

For a copy of the legislation, click here: <http://bit.ly/1EN4bBI>

For a copy of the Laws, click here (equal opportunities: Ch. 24, notably §1-2 inclusive): <http://bit.ly/1a9yCsG>

First signatory: Courtney Lewis

62 further signatories.

Details of the further signatories and the text of the petition can be found here: <https://www.change.org/p/a-petition-for-open-elections-for-all-students>

The Elections Committee for the Students' Association Elections 2015 asks the SRC and SSC to consider whether to strike §1.3.6 of Chapter 6 of the Laws that reads: "No student may hold the same elected position on the SRC or SSC for more than two consecutive

Ms Lewis spoke for two minutes to introduce the petition, which asked to strike §1.3.6 of Chapter 6 of the Laws that reads: "No student may hold the same elected position on the SRC or SSC for more than two consecutive years". She listed her reasons for being against the 2-year term limit for student officers.

Lengthy debate followed, with mixed opinions on whether the 2-term limit should be removed. Arguments that were in favour of striking §1.3.6 of Chapter 6 of the Laws included:

- It only rarely happens that officers want to be in the same position for more than two years. Apart from these very rare occasions, new students usually stand in the elections, and new members take the great majority of the positions. Therefore, the 2-term limit does not change the situation substantially;

- The few officers who are keen on keeping the same position for more than two years know how to do their job very well, and their experience is beneficial to the student experience;
- Sixty-two students signed the petition, and the councils should listen to their opinion. The students are able to vote using their own judgement, and the councils should not put any limitation to this;
- The example of the 2-term limit for Sabbs cannot be taken as an example in this occasion because the situations are too different. Sabbs who keep their role for too long might lose touch with the student community, whereas this is not the case for student officers;
- It is not true that student officers are too well known among students, and that running for a third term would discourage or scare new people to stand for that position. Moreover, if an incumbent candidate did not do a good job the previous years, students will not vote for them again. Finally, if new people do not nominate themselves because they are scared of running against an incumbent, they are not motivated enough;
- This is such a minor issue that affects a very small percentage of the student body and therefore the councils should not make such a big debate on it;
- Some projects require more than two years to be implemented;
- A payoff of having experienced officers in the councils is that it solves the problem of the lack of continuity year after year.

Arguments that were against striking §1.3.6 of Chapter 6 of the Laws included:

- After two year in a post, a person should move on and leave the position open for new volunteers, even if the incumbent has done a good job the previous years;
- It is harder to run against incumbent nominees. The student body know them better and they might simply vote for the incumbent for this reason;
- The same service year after year (even if an officer proved particularly good) is not the best service. New officers bring innovation and new ideas. We should encourage the distribution of knowledge and the possibility to build new skills for all;
- Term limits are common in several other parts of society;
- The longer a person stays in a post, the more difficult the handover process is;
- The officers sitting here have been voted by the student body and represent many more students than the 62 people who signed the petition;
- Without a term limit, if one year nobody nominates themselves for a particular position, the incumbent might feel the pressure to run again;

Relevant questions and comments made during the debate include:

- Mr Blain asked why the Scottish law establishes that the Sabbs can only keep the same position for no more than two terms, and why the same is not codified for

student officers. Ms Evans advised that, in the past, Sabbs kept the same role for too long and were, therefore, abusing their right to do so.

- Mr Tantillo asked whether an incumbent candidate ever lost. Mr Cupples replied that, in the past, it happened that incumbent Sabbatical nominees lost the elections.
- Ms Struetzel reminded everybody that the limit concerns only officers wanting to run for the third consecutive year. It would still be possible to take a year off the position and then run again the year after.

The councils moved to vote.

Ms Evans asked if attendees wanted a recorded vote and read the motion.

Ms Struetzel proposed a secret vote. Mr Tantillo seconded. Mr Dixon objected.

Debate followed on whether the councils should vote secretly or not.

A roll call vote was called to decide whether or not to vote secretly.

OFFICE	NAME	SRC			SSC		
		AYE	NO	ABS.	AYE	NO	ABS.
Arts/Divinity Faculty President	Eleanor Mullin	✓					
Association Alumni Officer	Charlotte Andrews		✓			✓	
Association Community Relations Officer	Clare Armstrong		✓			✓	
Association Director of Events and Services	Chris MacRae	✓			✓		
Association Director of Representation	Joe Tantillo	✓			✓		
Association Director of Student Development and Activities	Kyle Blain	✓			✓		
Association Environment and Ethics Officer	Alice Pickthall		✓			✓	
Association LGBT Officer	Sigrid Jorgensen	✓			✓		
Association President	Pat Mathewson		✓			✓	
President of the Athletic Union	Sarah Thompson	✓					

Science/Medicine Faculty President	Louise McCaul	✓					
SRC Accommodation Officer	Alexandre Ciric		✓				
SRC Equal Opportunities Officer	Omar Ali		✓				
SRC Employability Officer	Nils Turner	✓					
SRC External Campaigns Officer	Toby Emerson			✓			
SRC Member for Racial Equality	Jackie Ashkin		✓				
SRC Member for First Years	Holly Johnston	✓					
SRC Member for Gender Equality	Alice Lecointe		✓				
SRC Member for International Students	Adam Stromme	✓					
SRC Member for Mature Students	Aysha Marty	✓					
SRC Member for Students with Disabilities	Kate Mayer		✓				
SRC Postgraduate Convenor	Tania Struetzel	✓					
SRC Welfare Officer	Miriam Chappell			✓			
SSC Broadcasting Officer	Bruce Kerr					✓	
SSC Charities Officer	Amy Christison					✓	
SSC Debates Officer	Alyssa Muzyk					✓	
SSC External Funding Officer	Tierney Riordan					✓	
SSC Member without Portfolio	Annabel Romanos					✓	
SSC Music Officer	Ipek Ozsoy					✓	
SSC Performing Arts Officer	Jo Bowman					✓	
SSC Postgraduate Officer	Aline Heyerick					✓	
SSC Societies Officer	Robert Dixon					✓	

SSC Volunteering Officer	Julian Valladares Urruela					✓	
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With 12 members in the affirmative and 9 members in the negative the motion was adopted in the SRC. SRC will have a secret vote.

With 7 members in the affirmative and 11 members in the negative the motion failed in the SSC. SSC will have a recorded vote.

Mr Dixon stated that a super majority is needed for SRC to have a secret vote. Ms Evans replied that this does not figure in the standing orders.

A secret ballot was called for SRC to decide whether or not to strike 1.3.6 of Chapter 6 of the Laws.

With 6 members in the affirmative and 17 members in the negative, the motion failed in the SRC.

A recorded vote was called for SSC to decide whether or not to strike 1.3.6 of Chapter 6 of the Laws.

OFFICE	NAME	SSC		
		AYE	NO	ABS.
Association Alumni Officer	Charlotte Andrews	✓		
Association Community Relations Officer	Clare Armstrong	✓		
Association Director of Events and Services	Chris MacRae	✓		
Association Director of Representation	Joe Tantillo	✓		
Association Director of Student Development and Activities	Kyle Blain		✓	
Association Environment and Ethics Officer	Alice Pickthall		✓	
Association LGBT Officer	Sigrid Jorgensen		✓	
Association President	Pat Mathewson	✓		
SSC Broadcasting Officer	Bruce Kerr	✓		

SSC Charities Officer	Amy Christison		✓	
SSC Debates Officer	Alyssa Muzyk		✓	
SSC External Funding Officer	Tierney Riordan		✓	
SSC Member without Portfolio	Annabel Romanos		✓	
SSC Music Officer	Ipek Ozsoy		✓	
SSC Performing Arts Officer	Jo Bowman	✓		
SSC Postgraduate Officer	Aline Heyerick		✓	
SSC Societies Officer	Robert Dixon	✓		
SSC Volunteering Officer	Julian Valladares Urruela		✓	

With 8 members in the affirmative and 10 members in the negative, the motion failed in the SSC.

5. New General SRC Business

There was no new general SRC business.

6. New General SSC Business

There was no new general SSC business.

7. Any Other Competent Business

Mr Mathewson asked the member of The Saint in attendance to introduce himself. Mr Cassidy introduced himself.

Ms McDougall mentioned that the Design Team was running classes and that all could attend.

The meeting adjourned.