



University of St Andrews Students' Association Students' Representative Council

AGENDA

29th September 2022 – Committee Room– 19:30

Present

Member's Name	Position
Juan Rodriguez	Association President
AK Schott	Association Director of Education
Emma Craig	Association Director of Wellbeing & Equality
Ailsa Martin	Athletic Union President
Alasdair Richmond	Association Chair
Francesca Lavelle	SRC Arts & Divinity Faculty President
Jasmin Zheng	BAME Officer
Raghav Kediya	International Students' Officer
Sofia Johnson	LGBT+ Officer
Abd Alsattar Ardati	SRC Postgraduate Development Officer
Martyna Kemeklyte	SRC Science & Medicine Faculty President
Laura Connies-Laing	Societies Officer

In Attendance

Iain Cupples	Student Advocate (Education) / HR Manager
Alex Purcell	Student Councils Intern

1. Adoption of the Agenda

The agenda was adopted without dissent.

2. Apologies for Absence

No Apologies for absence.

3. Unfinished General Business

There was no unfinished general business.

4. New SRC Business

9.1. Postgraduate Academic Convenor co-option

Alasdair Richmond (AR) opened the discussion.

Two candidates for Postgraduate Academic Convenor (PGAC) were present at the meeting. Candidates were asked to justify their selection in a short speech of no more than two minutes. While one candidate spoke the other waited outside.

Sandro Eich (SE) went first, introducing himself as a third-year PhD candidate in the school of English. SE views the PGAC role as responsible for bringing other representatives together to communicate efficiently. As PGAC SE would devise a unified postgraduate strategy prioritising financial support for students during the cost-of-living crisis. Additionally, SE would address mental health issues prevalent amongst postgraduates. SE again stressed the connective function of the PGAC position, acknowledging the role-holder's obligation to oversee postgraduate representatives and encourage collaboration. SE said he would initially have to rely on the knowledge of the SRC if elected, as this is his first time standing as a student representative in St Andrews.

AK Schott (AKS) asked how SE saw himself working with other officers in representing the postgraduate cohort at university level.

SE stated his preference for communicating face-to-face, over Teams or in-person where possible. While not everyone has that flexibility, SE would try his best to be available as much as possible. SE emphasised his commitment to producing a strategy that would meet the various needs of postgraduate representatives, officers, and presidents.

Abd Alsattar Ardati (AAA) asked how SE planned on managing his time, noting that the PGAC role is very demanding. AAA additionally asked what SE knew about the postgraduate society, and how he planned to coordinate with other postgraduate members.

SE stated that as a third-year PhD candidate he had learned effective time management, time-blocking his calendar to assist productivity. SE has reached out to previous PGACs to ask for advice, as well as input on how the role can be made sustainable. Past PGACs confirmed the position was time-intensive and offered limited benefit to the student community, something SE will try and change. In response to AAA's second question, SE said he had not had much contact with the postgraduate society yet but did attend the postgraduate ball. SE would assist in organising events and look out for the welfare of postgraduate students, supporting those endeavours to the best of his ability. SE concluded his remarks by saying that the pandemic years have been depressing for postgraduate students, and that he would prioritise social events, mental healthcare initiatives, and financial support if elected.

SE temporarily exited the meeting, with J(?) re-entering.

Jessica John Prabakar (JJP) introduced herself as an MLitt International Business student. JJP explained that during her undergraduate studies she did not have an opportunity to be on a committee like the SRC but wanted to participate in student representation. JJP expressed her interest in and passion for the role's remit, additionally arguing that being PGAC would facilitate improved communication and time management skills.

AKS asked how JJP saw herself working with other officers in representing the postgraduate cohort at university level.

JJP responded by citing her attendance of three sessions on time management but acknowledged that only once assuming the role would she fully understand the workload. JJP described her diverse upbringing, suggesting it would help her in interactions with students from different cultures, and that she would be able to encourage different groups to work together.

AAA asked how JJP planned on managing his time, AAA additionally asked What JJP knew about the postgraduate society, and how she planned to coordinate with other postgraduate members.

JJP replied that there is a different starting point for everyone, and this is her starting point. JJP expressed confidence in her ability to quickly learn about the relevant organisations, and to achieve what she wanted to achieve.

JJP exited the meeting so voting could take place.

Voting was conducted via secret ballot.

SE received 14 votes.

JJP received 2 votes.

SE was co-opted as Postgraduate Academic Convenor.

JJP left the meeting.

9.2. R-22-20 Motion to Stand Against the Violation of Human Rights in Iran

Juan Rodriguez (JR) introduced the motion.

JR spoke about the ongoing unrest in Iran following the extrajudicial killing of Mahsa Amini on 16 September 2022. JR relayed that Iranian students and staff in the St Andrews community would like to see the SRC act, pledging support to those resisting tyranny, and supporting freedom of speech and personal liberty.

Raghav Kediya (RK) expressed his support for the motion, but asked why the SRC had not issued similar pledges of support in response to human rights abuses elsewhere, such as Afghanistan, Syria, Iran etc.

JR reiterated that the student body made a specific request for support from the SRC.

Jasmine Zheng (JZ) asked what follow-up action would be taken after the motion passed.

JR stated that there would be a vigil on 13 October in support of women, students and protestors facing violence and oppression in Iran.

JZ sought confirmation that there would be support available for Iranian students.

JR responded in the affirmative.

AR proposed a move to debate.

JR opened the debate.

JR argued it was good for the SRC to show support to students concerned about human rights, and hopefully raise awareness of the protests in Iran. JR hoped the motion passing would encourage the university to support affected students and staff.

AR proposed a move to vote.

The motion **passes without dissent**.

5. Any Other Competent Business

AKS officially welcomed SE to the SRC and wished AR a goodnight.

Meeting closed.