



# University of St Andrews

## Students' Association

### Students' Representative Council

## AGENDA

14<sup>th</sup> March 2023 – Large Rehearsal Room – 18:00

### **Present**

#### **Member's Name**

#### **Position**

Juan Rodriguez

Association President

AK Schott

Association Director of Education

Lucy Brook

Association Director of Events and Services

Emma Craig

Association Director of Wellbeing & Equality

Sam Gorman

Association Director of Student Development & Activities

Ailsa Martin

Athletic Union President

Alasdair Richmond

Association Chair

Aditya Goel

SRC Alumni Officer

Francesca Lavelle

SRC Arts & Divinity Faculty President

Jasmin Zheng

BAME Officer

Alice Chapman

Charities Officer

Mashaim Bukhari

Community Relations Officer

Mathis Bourassa

Employability Officer

Rachel Nevinova

SRC Gender Equality Officer

Raghav Kediya

International Students' Officer

Zaine Mansuralli

SRC Postgraduate Activities Officer

Abd Alsattar Ardati

SRC Postgraduate Development Officer

Niya Dobрева

Postgraduate Activities Officer

Sandro Eich

Postgraduate Academic Convenor

Samuel Woodall

Postgraduate Development Officer

Martyna Kemeklyte	SRC Science & Medicine Faculty President
Sana Aboobacker	Student Health Officer
Ramsay Bader	Widening Access & Participation Officer
Stella Maris	Rector's Assessor

### **In Attendance**

Iain Cupples	Student Advocate (Education) / HR Manager
Alex Purcell	Student Councils Intern
Dean Drew	Deputy Chief Information Officer for IT Services
Jack Kennedy	Saints LGBT+ Marketing Officer

#### **1. Adoption of the Agenda**

The agenda was adopted.

#### **2. Apologies for Absence**

Laura Connies-Laing

#### **3. Adoption of the Minutes from the Previous SRC Meeting**

The minutes were adopted.

##### **3.1. 21<sup>st</sup> February 2023**

#### **4. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

There were no matters arising from the previous meeting.

#### **5. Open Forum**

A.K. Schott's (AKS) petition to extend [R-22-23](#) was postponed until open discussion.

#### **6. Reports of Sabbatical Officers**

##### **6.1. Report of the Association President**

Juan Rodriguez (JR) has been busy with academic appeals. JR will be visiting Buckingham Palace along with sabbatical officers from other universities to discuss matters affecting the wider student community. Efforts to deepen the institutional ties between the St Andrews and Edinburgh student officers is ongoing. JR advertised an upcoming community music event to celebrate the reopening of the bandstand near the Aquarium. JR has been preparing for an upcoming HMO policy meeting with Fife Council and continues to correspond with local representatives. JR has been liaising

with students whose accommodation applications for the coming year were rejected, directing them to the Association's advisory resources. Work to improve alumni engagement continues. JR continues to work on delivering on his fundraising pledges before the end of his term. As part of this, profits from the Association shop will now contribute to the discretionary fund.

### **6.2. Report of the Athletic Union President**

Ailsa Martin (AM) submitted a written report. AM has been working on the logistics of the upcoming Sports Awards. Varsity competitions begin next Wednesday; event times will be published shortly. AM also announced that the Student Sport Team is recruiting student officers for the coming academic year. Work on an Athletic Union (AU) executive committee question form is ongoing. Minutes from executive committee meetings will henceforth be made publicly available.

### **6.3. Report of the Director of Education**

AKS has been working on academic appeals, upcoming classroom awards and the Proctor's award. Said awards recognise sustained effort and exceptional impact on learning and teaching. AKS has also been working on reforming the UAF, promoting good practice, and preparing for the handover to the incoming Director of Education.

### **6.4. Report of the Director of Events & Services**

Lucy Brook (LB) has been organising board and subcommittee dinners. LB addressed the temporary closure of 601: a recent inspection found a type of concrete in the ceiling that is no longer considered sufficiently durable in the long-term. LB is uncertain how long 601 will remain closed. Efforts to relocate events are ongoing. LB noted that the university has promised students who were to hold events in 601 will not be financially impacted by the closure. LB is trying to get this commitment in writing. LB's overall focus is on downsizing and reorganising events so they can still go ahead.

Iain Cupples (IC) confirmed it is the responsibility of the university as owner of the Association building to complete the repairs in 601. At the time of this meeting, the university has not indicated how long the repairs will take.

### **6.5. Report of the Director of Student Development & Activities**

Sam Gorman (SG) has been ensuring society AGMs take place on time. SG will be on the Enterprising Mind of the Year judging panel. SG announced that the Student Access Awards are now open and encouraged SRC members to share this news. The timeline for updating the volunteering portal is still uncertain. SG is in the early stages of planning next year's Fresher's Fayre, which will likely again be in collaboration with Saints Sport because of the closure of 601.

### **6.6. Report of the Director of Wellbeing**

Emma Craig (EC) submitted a written report. EC echoed SG's point about the Student Access Awards. EC suggested that leaders of subcommittees encourage their members to write up bullet points about personal achievements, for the purpose of helping others write up nominations. Areas of focus in EC's written report include Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM); the gender equality charter; improving communication with commuter students; the cost-of-living crisis; recording achievements of class representatives prior to their terms ending. EC noted that Jane Yarnell is also working on ensuring achievements and key decisions of student officers are recorded, to promote greater continuity and preserve insights.

JY stated that anyone interested in a handover form should contact her.

## **7. Questions for SRC Members**

**7.1. Questions for Accommodation Officer**

**7.2. Questions for Alumni Officer**

**7.3. Questions for Arts/Divinity Faculty President**

**7.4. Questions for BAME Officer**

**7.5. Questions for Charities Officer**

AC: Nominate people for charity awards.

**7.6. Questions for Community Relations Officer**

**7.7. Questions for Disability Officer**

**7.8. Questions for Employability Officer**

**7.9. Questions for Environment Officer**

**7.10. Questions for Gender Equality Officer**

**7.11. Questions for International Officer**

**7.12. Questions for LGBT+ Officer**

**7.13. Questions for Lifelong and Flexible Learners Officer**

**7.14. Questions for Postgraduate Academic Officer**

**7.15. Questions for Postgraduate Activities Officer**

**7.16. Questions for Postgraduate Development Officer**

**7.17. Questions for Rector's Assessor**

**7.18. Questions for Science/Medicine Faculty President**

**7.19. Questions for Secretary to the SRC**

**7.20. Questions for Societies Officer**

**7.21. Questions for Student Health Officer**

**7.22. Questions for Widening Access and Participation Officer**

## **8. Unfinished General Business**

### **9. New SRC Business**

**9.1. Consultation – IT Enabling Strategy**

Dean Drew (DD), the Deputy Chief Information Officer for IT Services with the university, attended the meeting to discuss the IT Enabling Strategy (ITES). DD noted that the refreshed university strategy came out last year, with the ITES as a component. The main purpose of the ITES is to facilitate the wider university strategy. The ITES was informed by extensive feedback from various university officials. Key areas of focus include improving the eco-system for online master's courses; broadening WIFI coverage; increasing accessibility; promoting cybersecurity. DD encouraged SRC members to read the strategy and provide feedback. IT Services have requested funding for implementation of the strategy and want to make it as good as possible.

JY asked whether there anything about accessibility of online systems in the strategy?

DD confirmed that effort was being made to improve inadequate systems and promote accessibility.

Sandro Eich (SE) noted that students with MAC computers are currently unable to print to university printers and asked whether the updated ITES addresses this.

DD responded that the university printing contract is up for renewal within 12 months, and the issue will inform future negotiations.

Rache Nevinova (RN) asked whether there are plans to help students without laptops capable of running programs essential for their courses.

DD noted that the hardship fund is available for this type of issue. Dean also stated that IT Services have recently secured funding for these types of cases and can offer laptops to students in need.

JR asked about the timeline for updating the university webpages, as well as plans for redevelopment of the university app.

DD was unable to provide a timeline for updating the website. DD said that IT Services intend content on the redeveloped app to be student led and expressed interest in a working group focused on gathering input and suggestions from the wider student community. DD can be reached at [Dsd2@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:Dsd2@st-andrews.ac.uk).

## **9.2. R-23-05 Motion to amend Saints LGBT+ constitution to create Accessibility and Inclusion Officer position.**

Jack Kennedy (JK) spoke on behalf of Sofia Johnson (SJ), who was absent. JK described the need for a member of the Saints LGBT+ subcommittee dedicated to advocating on behalf of LGBT+ BAME students. JK described the hostility of the current socio-political climate towards LGBT+ students, noting that BAME members of the community were in an even worse position due to structural inequality. JK acknowledged the profound debt the modern LGBT+ community owes to BAME activists. JK wants to ensure the LGBT+ subcommittee truly represents all members of its community and envisions the proposed role as helping achieve that goal.

Following discussion between JK, EC, JY, and Jasmine Zheng (JZ) concerning the remit and title of the new role, the position name was amended to Saints LGBT+ BAME Officer.

IC explained that the Association would not bar candidates who were not part of the BAME or LGBT+ community from nominating themselves for the role but noted that the membership of subcommittees was at the discretion of the elected officer leading it.

The motion **passes without dissent.**

**9.3. R-23-06 Motion to require subcommittee committee members to be in good standing with the Union.**

SG explained that SRC members and school presidents must be in good standing with the Association to hold their positions. The current wording of the laws suggests this requirement does not apply to subcommittee members. The motion would change this so that students must be in good standing to run for subcommittee roles. SG proposed allowing students to declare themselves in good standing at the hustings, checking their status after the relevant AGM.

IC clarified that being in good standing means that you do not owe money to the university or the Association or have outstanding disciplinary measures ongoing (excluding a warning). An extant no-contact order with another student also prevents good standing. IC expressed support for allowing candidates to declare themselves in good standing to run for subcommittee roles. IC stated that candidates found to have misled the Association at the AGM would be removed from their position.

In response to questions from RN about payment of outstanding fines, IC explained that a student who makes an agreement to pay their fine is considered in good standing. IC also noted that all disciplinary information will remain confidential.

Motion **passes without dissent.**

**9.4. R-23-07 SRC Motion to Support the Maintenance of Hybrid Access to Teaching in Exceptional Circumstances**

JY explained that during the pandemic teaching was delivered through hybrid formats, which proved more convenient for disabled students. Many university buildings are old, not accessible for certain disabled students, and incapable of being made accessible. JY drew attention to the fact that hybrid teaching made classes more accessible for disabled students, as well as those who commute or have carer responsibilities. The university recently clarified that hybrid delivery would no longer be allowed.

RN stated their belief that the university had previously promised to protect hybrid delivery.

JY explained that the university promised lecture recording would continue but did not have an official policy on hybrid teaching until recently deciding to forbid it. This decision was made through consultation with various faculty deans. JY was uncertain as to how this would impact international students reliant on hybrid delivery whose visas require class attendance. JY stated that whether joining a Teams call counted as attendance or not, it was surely more educationally beneficial than total absence.

The motion **passes without dissent.**

Francesca Lavelle (FL) left the meeting.

**10. Open Discussion**

**[Requirement to submit motions 72 hours prior to meeting waived in this instance after no objections were issued]**

## **R-23-08**

AKS explained that the UCU is currently re-balloting members on whether to continue strike action. It is uncertain what the UCU leadership's new mandate will be. AKS noted the SRC would have to discuss whether it wanted to support a marking and assessment boycott, should such a measure be enacted. AKS emphasised the importance of extending solidarity to striking workers. AKS acknowledged that the strikes were affecting students and staff in different ways, reminding the SRC of their obligations to all parties.

The motion **passes without dissent.**

### **11. Any Other Competent Business**

The SRC were reminded that feedback on elections should be sent to: [saelect@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:saelect@st-andrews.ac.uk), AKS also expressed interest in receiving feedback about the elections. AKS thanked the SRC for their help in promoting student democracy.

RN and JK reminded the SRC that Pride is returning in person on April 1<sup>st</sup> for the first time since the pandemic. JK noted that the LGBT+ subcommittee has numerous stalls and festivities planned as part of the celebration.

Alasdair Richmond (AR) thanked the SRC for their hard work during his tenure as Chair.

**Meeting closed.**