University of St Andrews

Students’ Association

Students’ Representative Council

Minutes

**15th October 2024 – Large Rehearsal Room – 18:00**

**Present**

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| **Name** | **Position** |
| Cam Brown | Association President |
| Hitanshi Badani | Director of Education |
| Caitlin Ridgway | Director of Wellbeing |
| Luke Baird | Association Chair |
| Jack Kennedy | LGBT+ Officer |
| Alexander Chun | Gender Equality Officer |
| Caitie Steele | Societies Officer |
| Lauren Cook | Disability Officer |
| Emily Bannister | Arts and Divinity Faculty President |
| Jack McNealy | Accommodation Officer |
| Naomi Smith | Environment Officer |
| Lillie Shipman | Community Relations Officer |
| Keegan Shimaitis | Charities Officer |
| Thomas Carey | Employability Officer |
| Amanda Cao | Carers, Commuters, Mature and Flexible Learners Officer |
| Manya Dutt | BAME Officer |
| Taasia Thong | International Students’ Officer |
| Daria Gusa | Alumni Officer |
| Rob Johnston | Music Officer |
| Louise Anderbjork | Performing Arts Officer |
| Phoebe Rickard | Science and Medicine Faculty President |
| Nuttaricha Ngarmskullert | Secretary to the SRC |
| Lola Chirico | Student Health Officer |
| Nathaniel Rice | Widening Access and Participation Officer |
| Milo Hill | Director of Events & Services |
| Callum Irvine | Postgraduate Research President |
| William Evans | Postgraduate Taught President |

In Attendance

Isabel Kagoo Student Councils’ Intern

# Adoption of the Agenda

Agenda adopted without dissent

# Apologies for Absence

DoSDA, AU President

# Adoption of the Minutes from the Previous SRC Meeting

Callum Irvine asks that the PG absences be removed from the Apologies for Absence section.

No further debate. Minutes are adopted.

# Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

# Open Forum

# Reports of Sabbatical Officers

1. Report of the Association President

Cam Brown (CB) discusses the continuing work with the Change Programme. He also announces that the two postgraduate paid positions have been filled by Callum and William. These positions were created in light of the Democracy Review within the Change Programme. Additionally, CB notes that Natalie with the Change Programme will be reaching out to all of the officers in the coming weeks to attend workshops about what the Democracy Review is and what the key recommendations are. She will also be looking to have conversations with SRC officers about your experiences as student representatives, so CB asks that all officers keep an eye out for emails from her. He also notes that the Campus Larder opened up last week and it has been very successful as there has been an increase in usage. They are working with the University to expand the space and make it more accessible for students. His final point is that an update on the Rectors situation and the constitution will be coming soon.

1. Report of the Athletic Union President

No report due to absence.

1. Report of the Director of Education

Hitanshi Badani (HB) reports on model evaluation questionnaires and the mid-semester feedback system. She notes that the School Presidents are currently working on a coordinated system that will centralize the forms and feedback. This system will also allow the Students’ Association to have more access to the responses and data collected. HB encourages all officers to engage with the forms as their purpose is to reduce the duplication of surveys and tackle the problem of survey fatigue. She reports that she has been working closely with the University as it explores possible new providers for a new system that both the University and Students’ Association would use for bringing in feedback and surveys. Additionally, HB notes that she has still been working on the Student Partnership Agreement. It is in draft form, but she still encourages officers review the document prior to discussion. HB has been working on another project with Molly from the Disabled Students Network. They are drafting a guidance document for schools that are creating decompression spaces. She also notes ongoing policy consultations with the University and informs officers that new guidance on artificial intelligence and changes to assessment and exams policies will be released soon. HB informs officers that it is EduRep week, so they are planning on using comms to highlight the work that academic representatives are doing. In terms of EduComm, they have been discussing the issue of students on placement years in certain schools still paying tuition fees. She notes that in the past, this issue has come up as an SRC motion so this could happen again. HB’s final point is that she is working with School Presidents on centralizing the extensions policy system within all schools.

Daria Gusa (DG) asks a question about who has access to the mid-semester questionnaire responses.

HB responds that depending on the section of the survey, some faculty may or may not have access to the data. However, no faculty has any agency over the questions asked.

1. Report of the Director of Events & Services

Milo Hill (MH) notes that they have been focusing on the successful launch of the new society club nights and other ways to reinvent and revitalize the Bop. MH is also looking to put on regular events for postgraduate students. MH is mainly focusing on organizing the Halloween week events. They note that free tickets are available for those that are willing to help with decorations. MH informs that they plan on starting preparations for the upcoming Winter Wonderland event.

1. Report of the Director of Student Development & Activities

No report due to absence.

1. Report of the Director of Wellbeing

Caitlin Ridgway (CR) notes that this week is Hate Crime Awareness Week, so she has been focused on resources, signposting, etc. CR has been putting out graphics clarifying the different ways of reporting, making disclosures, and response times. On Thursday, there is a dog cuddling/Report + Support event in 601 from 2-3:30pm and she encourages all officers to attend. CR notes that this weekend is Raisin and has been attending University meeting in preparation. She also notes that she has made Instagram content on how to stay safe during Raisin. CR informs that she has been helping with hiring an advocacy coordinator, who will oversee the Help Hub. CR thanks the officers for passing the motion last meeting on the Safe Nights Out campaign. Since then, there has been a successful Safe Nights Out forum for venue staff locally and within the greater Fife region. The forum included a spiking awareness and a bystander training and lots of additional resources. CR finally notes that she has been attending a university working group called LGBTQ Plan which seeks to work with other higher education institutions to create equality focused EDI goals.

# Questions for SRC Members

1. Questions for Accommodation Officer
2. Questions for Alumni Officer

Thomas Carey (TC) asks a question about the alumni/careers event.

Daria Gusa (DG) responds and states that the event will either be at the end of February or early March in parliament hall. She is hoping to have one big event where there are numerous speakers that students can directly engage with.

Callum Irvine (CI) asks that DG speak to PG Reps if she needs help. CI also asks for alumni that can speak about postgrad career options be included in the event.

Taasia Thong (TT) asks for international alumni that have been able to stay in the UK to be included in the event.

Hitanshi Badani (HB) notes that the University Development Office, whose main role is keeping in touch with alumni, may be a good resource for connecting with potential speakers.

1. Questions for Arts/Divinity Faculty President
2. Questions for BAME Officer
3. Questions for Charities Offier
4. Questions for Community Relations Officer
5. Questions for Disability Officer
6. Questions for Employability Officer
7. Questions for Environment Officer
8. Questions for Gender Equality Officer
9. Questions for International Officer
10. Questions for LGBT+ Officer

Thomas Carey (TC) asks question about a St Fessdrews comment made by Jack Kennedy.

Jack Kennedy (JK) states that there was nothing wrong with the comment because they were commenting from their personal account.

1. Questions for Lifelong and Flexible Learners Officer
2. Questions for Postgraduate Academic Officer
3. Questions for Postgraduate Activities Officer
4. Questions for Postgraduate Development Officer
5. Questions for Science/Medicine Faculty President
6. Questions for Secretary to the SRC
7. Questions for Societies Officer

Alexander Chun (AC) asks about resources for American students given the upcoming election.

Caitie Steele (CS) notes that the Wellbeing Committee does not have any events planned but will be happy to put on an event in collaboration with other societies and share resources on Instagram.

Caitlin Ridgway (CR) notes that they will alert student services and nightline.

Alexander Chun (AC) asks if there are any plans in place to address panic from the election.

Cam Brown (CB) notes that there are no plans in place at the moment, but he can work with the team to put something together in an email.

1. Questions for Student Health Officer
2. Questions for Widening Access and Participation Officer
3. Questions for Music Officer
4. Questions for Performing Arts Officer

# Unfinished General Business

# New SRC Business

1. Update on the progress of R-24-07

Cam Brown (CB) reads aloud the update prepared by Holly. Resolves 3 and 4, which discuss academic freedom and freedom of expression, is affirmed in the Activism Guide and External Speakers Policy. In respect of Resolves 6, the right to protest is affirmed on the website, with further detail on safely arranging a protest. In terms of Resolves 8, in the all-student email in Week 1, the Association President shared information about a Palestinian poetry night. Events will continue to be shared when there is enough notice to be able to do so. Resolves 9 was addressed in a news article that went live on the website on Tuesday 1 October. In this update, what the SRC and Students’ Association can and cannot do with respect to charity law was explained. In essence, legally, any matter that does not affect students as students directly, the Students’ Association cannot direct our resources to these things. To clarify, the Association legally cannot comment on military action taken by the UK or any other state worldwide. With respect to Resolves 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15, limited support (such as room bookings, sharing information about your events, and existing Students’ Association funding where eligible) will be provided, as these are about facilitating student events, practical support with protests, and advocating for support from the University. The Sabbs have raised the specific issue of support to Student Services on a number of occasions and will continue to do so.

No questions regarding the update.

1. R-24-03 Motion to establish an official International Students’ Subcommittee

The motion is introduced by Taasia Thong (TT) the International Students Officer. TT notes that the international student population is not a homogenous group as these students come from different countries and backgrounds. Therefore, TT notes that it is hard for one person to represent this large, diverse group. With how short her term is, she also feels that more work can be accomplished with a subcommittee, opposed to just one officer. TT discusses ongoing projects, such as an International Students Guide, that can be sped up with the help of a subcommittee. She also wants to create spaces for international students to meet and form cross-cultural connections.

Daria Gusa (DG) asks how many people will be in the subcommittee.

TT responds by stating that it will be around 9 people, but would be open to a larger number if the subcommittee wants to expand in the future.

Caitlin Ridgway (CR) notes her support for this motion. From personal experience, she feels that it is important to have additional help.

Jack Kennedy (JK) points out that while the Change Programme could change things, Taasia needs help right now and would benefit from having a subcommittee.

Cam Brown (CB) proposes an amendment to change the review date to December 2024 so it is in line with the Democracy Review.

Alexander Chun (AC) likes the idea of collaborating with the SRC Employability Officer because the employment process in the UK can be confusing for international students.

Jack McNealy (JM) looping that the subcommittee would be helpful for him as the accommodation officer because he deals with international students and the additional support would be welcomed.

Alexander Chun (AC) asks if TT has any plans for supporting William & Mary and study abroad students.

TT responds by stating that she is preparing a guide for study abroad students and can expand that to W&M students.

Association Chair (AC) recommends the inclusion of a postgraduate representative role within the constitution. The constitution can be approved by the SRC but then it will have to be voted on by the SSG at the end of November.

Hitanshi Badani (HB) asks if that means that the subcommittee will not be able to recruit until the end of November.

Jack Kennedy (JK) and Association Chair (AC) agree that she can still have a temporary working group prior to official approval.

Daria Gusa (DG) asks if the Union’s Instagram can be used to register interest for this working group/subcommittee.

Cam Brown (CB) notes that he is more than happy to include it in the weekly email.

Association Chair (AC) notes four amendments to the motion.

* Change the review date to December 2024.
* Remove ‘immediate effect’ from Resolve 1.
* Add ‘pending approval by the board’ to Resolve 2.
* Adjust the timing in Resolve 3 to state “To review as part of the ongoing democracy review”.

The motion passes with all in favor.

1. ~~Discussion on Law reform~~

This agenda item was skipped due to Natalie’s absence.

1. Discussion on Student Partnership Agreement Draft

Hitanshi Badani (HB) notes that the Student Partnership Agreement was discussed during the last SRC meeting. Since then, she has taken the discussion points and the responses to the form and incorporated the key points into a draft. HB reassures that the draft can still change if officers feel that any points are missing. She also highlights that the purpose of this document is will not be extremely specific as it needs to be able to incorporate the needs of any student representative for the next three years. Therefore, HB feels we need to be mindful of what other student representatives want as well as future representatives. HB concludes by stating that she is very happy to take feedback and reflect on the next draft.

Caitlin Ridgway (CR) thanks HB for her work on the draft.

# Open Discussion

# Any Other Competent Business

Cam Brown (CB) reports that he has been meeting with the Rector and they have come to a compromise and will hopefully finalize this proposal before the next meeting. He also notes that Natalie will be reaching out to SRC officers individually and encourages officers to check their emails.

Jack Kennedy (JK) notes that Sarah Rodriquez, an archivist, is looking for documents (digital and physical copies) from student reps to add to her collection on St Andrews. Her email is skr23@st-andrews.ac.uk.

Hitanshi Badani (HB) clarifies that all officers are happy with the current draft and all officers are okay with HB to take the draft to the University.

Association Chair (AC) highlights the recent email sent about the antisemitism training on Nov 14th. AC notes that if you can’t make the training please contact Iain. There may be another date for those that can’t make the first training. Either training is mandatory so if you don’t attend and don’t explain your absence that will count as an absence from SRC. He asks all officers to fill out the form to confirm attendance.