



Papers for SRC Meeting

21st February 2023 – StAge – 18:00

Contents of Papers:

1. Report from the Director of Wellbeing and Equality
2. Report from the Athletic Union President
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Report from the Director of Wellbeing and Equality

Cost of Living

Feedback gathering

Holly and I had the idea to use the windowed wall of the Sabb Office as a space for collecting informal input from students about how the Cost of Living crisis is affecting them, that way we have a continuous source of honest feedback and ideas coming directly from students and don't push people to fill out another long survey.

I invited the Money Mentors from Student Services (student interns brought on recently to share money advice with students in the Cost of Living context) and Food4Students to weigh in on the questions we ask. We settled on three key questions across four areas (housing, physical/mental health, social life/community, and academics): how you have been affected, what has helped, and what would help. The Money Mentors came by on 8 March and together we wrote the questions on the window, and I set up a table outside the office with sticky notes and pens for people to add their thoughts, and posters I designed to encourage students to check out the Union's Cost of Living Guide for more resources.

There should be a post on the Union social media soon announcing the window project, and it would be helpful for subcoms and officers share this to reach your audiences. You are all also welcome to pop any of your own thoughts onto sticky notes whenever you're next in the building!

I will take this feedback to the Cost of Living Taskforce on a rolling basis to review how effective existing provisions from the Union and University have been and to prioritise the areas of support students are most in need of right now. We are planning to leave it up for the rest of the semester if it works well.

Commuter Students

The SRC Lifelong and Flexible Learners Officer and other students I have met with have identified a need for better communication with commuter students. I drafted content for a Commuter Students webpage for the Union website with input from the Association President, Wellbeing & Equality Coordinator, and University Director of Student Experience that will include key static information on support, resources and events available to commuter students. The Union Web Coordinator (Andrew) has set up the webpage under 'Support' on the Union site.

I have been wanting to send out a regular Commuter Students email, much like the sabb email but with specific information on upcoming events and opportunities or updates on resources relevant to commuters, and our main barrier was mailing lists. The University manually generated a list of commuter students at the start of the semester using term-time addresses from MySaint, which they used to send out a welcome back message with resources. They have agreed to let us use this mailing list for now, and I am advocating on the Taskforce for Registry to establish a longer-term solution to generate and update a list of commuter students (as this list only includes those who were commuter students as of January 2023). The Association President and I also created a Commuter Students mailing list signup form which we shared in a recent sabb email, that way any students not already on the University's one-time list can opt-in to our communications. We are hoping to send out the first Commuter Student Sabb Email in the next few weeks!

Free food

On Friday 10 March, ACE transported leftover food from University Cafés to the Union which we put out on tables on the piazza for students to collect for free on a first-come, first-served basis. The amount of food was less than expected, so I will take this back to the Cost of Living Taskforce to explore other options in the future, such as listing the leftovers on the 2Good2Go app for free, rather than advertising it in the weekly sabb email. The Taskforce was already looking to make this a more regular occurrence when there is leftover food, both to support cost of living and to reduce food waste on campus.

SMHA

Holly and I met with the Libraries team, who were keen to offer resources for us to set up similar interactive informal feedback mechanisms to the sabb window project in University buildings across campus. We are considering collecting feedback about the Student Mental Health Agreement to check in with students around a year after the big SMHA survey and halfway through the agreement's term (2022-24) to see if priorities have shifted and keep students in the loop about progress that has been made in the last year.

I have also been writing up a formal proposal about the Nightline information database, which is one of the core SMHA projects under priority area 'Improving Awareness of and Access to Support'. The paper gives a comprehensive background and overview of where the project stands and what kind of resourcing is needed to move forward, so that I can either make a case for resource provision from the Union or University, or I can hand it over to the next DoWell in a form that they will be able to progress.

Elections

Since the start of the Elections cycle, I have met with several prospective DoWell candidates to answer questions about my role and helped to confirm Elections Rules for current officers. I filmed a 'pledge to vote' video, and ran a takeover of the Class of 2026 Instagram page to show a 'day in the life' of the DoWell and encourage first year students to care about their representatives and engage with Elections.

I co-moderated the Advocacy Town Hall with the Councils Intern (Alex), and the Wellbeing & Equalities Town Hall with the Wellbeing & Equality Co-ordinator (Holly). Well done to the candidates for their answers and thank you to everyone who came along and submitted questions!

Sexual and Gender-Based Violence

SAAM

Planning for Sexual Assault Awareness Month continues with students from and beyond the SGBV Forum. We are looking into putting on a vigil for survivors and potentially a silent march at the start of the month. I am coordinating with Peer Support and GotConsent to put together a workshop on supporting survivors, using existing materials from GotConsent and PeerSupport workshops – the initial outline was approved at our last meeting on 7 March, and now we are assembling the content into a presentation and confirming volunteer availability to facilitate it in April.

SGBV Forum

Our last SGBV Forum meeting is on 21 March, in which we will finalise arrangements for SAAM and Sarah Browne, Project Officer for Student Services, will be presenting a draft for the new student SGBV Policy, which I have been working with her on, to gather student input. If you'd like to weigh in on this policy or get involved with SAAM, just get in touch with me and I can add you to the Team!

Training for Officers

Along with the rest of the Sabb team, Holly and I have been organising several key trainings for the incoming SRC officers which will run primarily in Week 9 on: finance and budgeting, IT and cybersecurity, Union Basics, MHAP, and risk assessment. We hope this will better prepare new officers for their roles and give them some useful skills for professional development.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Athena Swan

Work on the Athena Swan Charter continues. In the most recent working group meeting about next steps for submission, a paper was presented proposing changes to University data monitoring, which would follow new requirements from Athena Swan to ask a person's sex in all surveys and data collection used in the charter submission. The paper proposed we add the sex question, using wording taken from Advance HE guidance, alongside the existing two questions on gender and trans identity that are standard in University data collection currently. I challenged this decision, to make sure we are not blindly following Athena Swan's policy change if it is not the right move for St Andrews. I raised that asking staff and students to declare their sex and whether they identify as trans may feel to them like the University is prioritising the wrong things, particularly for many whose sex is not relevant to their identity. It was mentioned that some people have complained before about being asked for their gender in University surveys and data collection where they would have preferred to declare their sex.

Sukhi Bains, Head of Equality and Diversity, mentioned that Athena Swan is planning a review of such policies soon, and confirmed that we could include a statement in our charter submission on St Andrews' reasoning for collecting data on gender rather than sex, to be considered in their review.

Equality Committee

The final meeting of the Student Equality Forum before Elections met on 7 March, and we discussed how to better integrate EDI academic reps into existing structures within the Union and the University. SRC Disability Officer (Jane Yarnell) explained how the DSN will be asking current Disability and Academic Support reps to fill out a handover template, which they will hold onto over

summer and share with the newly elected reps in September. Present Equality Committee members were keen to include this idea in their handover to potentially do something similar so that insights from outgoing academic EDI reps are not lost due to the gap over summer where the academic rep positions are unfilled.

Equality Committee members are continually contributing to content we are assembling for a hate crime awareness campaign. We will discuss next steps with the Design & Marketing department after the workload from Elections dies down.

Report from the Athletic Union President

Sports Awards

We are in the nomination shortlisting process for sports awards, we've had a great number and quality of nominations and it is set to be another great year to celebrate. The final organisation for the event in the Old Course this year are also going well. Ticket sales are looking good and we hope that the evening will be greatly enjoyable and a way for more people to celebrate a successful sporting year than in previous event formats.

Varsity

The Stirling St Andrews Varsity matches are set to take place on Wednesday 22nd March across both Universities. We will be hosting roughly half of the sports and the others will be in Stirling. We will be tracking the scores throughout the day to name an overall winner at the end of the event. In St Andrews we will also have a food truck during the afternoon so that spectators, visitors and athletes can get food from there (and the cafe) while they enjoy the event. Information will be released with dates and times on Wednesday/Thursday and we hope that people will come up and enjoy the sport!

Student Sport Team

We are currently in the process of interviewing for the Student Sport Team internships for next year that will have the opportunity to engage more in Saints Sport and represent the student voice. Our Exec committee is co-opted from the SST and their work has been really important this year. We will be conducting handovers in these roles so that their work is continued and knowledge shared for continuity and support. One of the next things we wish to implement for the Exec Committee is a question/issue collecting form that will be monitored by the AU President. This would be a space where people could raise suggestions, questions and issues regarding student sport which could be a) answered directly by the AU President b) discussed at AU Exec (minutes of these meetings will be openly available) or c) raised at AU Board (if deemed appropriate). Any feedback on this process or recommendations or good practice from other places would be appreciated.

SRC REPORTS

SRC Alumni Officer – Aditya Goel

No response submitted.

SRC Arts and Divinity Faculty President – Francesca Jane Lavelle

No response submitted.

SRC BAME Officer – Yuyu Jasmin Zheng

No response submitted.

SRC Charities Officer – Alice Chapman

No response submitted.

SRC Community Relations Officer – Mashaim Bukhari

No response submitted.

SRC Disability Officer – Jane Yarnell

No response submitted.

SRC Employability Officer – Mathis Bourassa

No response submitted.

SRC Environment Officer – Marcelina Lekawska

No response submitted.

SRC Gender Equality Officer – Rach Nevinova

No response submitted.

SRC International Students' Officer – Raghav Kediya

What have you done since the last meeting/report?

- Sat on relevant meetings.
- Discussed the creation of a subcommittee of the role with DoWell.

What progress has been made on your manifesto?

- Worked on communication aspect of my manifesto.

What do you hope to achieve by your next report?

- Successful handover.

Any events or opportunities that you would like other members to know about?

No response submitted.

SRC LGBT+ Officer – Sofia Johnson

No response submitted.

SRC Lifelong and Flexible Learners Officer – Molly Paule Wilson

No response submitted.

SRC Postgraduate Academic Convenor – Sandro Eich

What have you done since the last meeting/report?

Since the last meeting, I have attended Academic Monitoring Group, Learning and Teaching Committee, Postgraduate Research Committee, and Education Executive catch-ups. I have pushed participation in the PTES and PRES surveys in collaboration with St Leonard's College and the University's Quality Assurance office. Last week, I have initiated a project to explore whether Vertically Integrated Projects could be structurally integrated more efficiently into PGT curriculum. Additionally, I have met with an Associate Consultant from SUMS consultancy to discuss how to most effectively communicate and consult with the postgraduate community as part of the merger of the School of Management and School of Economics and Finance into a Business School. Additionally, I have met and discussed issues at PGR level in the School of Modern Language with the PG reps, as well as the Director of Postgraduate Research and the Provost. I am currently writing a piece for the new launch of the St Leonard's Postgraduate College Magazine on the Future of Postgraduate Study in St Andrews.

What progress has been made on your manifesto?

We have completed the development of Old Burgh School's social area with a few outstanding pieces of furniture to be added over the next few months.

What do you hope to achieve by your next report?

Further develop the VIP for PGTs project, monitor how PG-related matters in the development of the Business School are considered, and prepare a written handover for my predecessor.

Any events or opportunities that you would like other members to know about?

As of now, the positions for Postgraduate Academic Convenor, Postgraduate Activities Officer, and Postgraduate Development Officer have received no nominations of candidates. If you know any postgraduates involved in your sub-committees, it would be great if you could speak to them whether they could imagine to stand for any of these positions. If they are interested in PGAC, please feel free to connect us and I very happily will answer any questions.

SRC Postgraduate Activities Officer – Niya Dobрева

No response submitted.

SRC Postgraduate Development Officer – Samuel Woodall

No response submitted.

SRC Rector's Assessor – Stella Maris

No response submitted.

SRC Science and Medicine Faculty President – Martyna Kemeklyte

No response submitted.

Secretary to the SRC – Lewis O'Neill

No response submitted.

SRC Societies Officer – Laura Connies-Laing

No response submitted.

SRC Student Health Officer – Sana Aboobacker

What have you done since the last meeting/report?

We are currently preparing for Wellbeing Week scheduled for the second week of April.

What progress has been made on your manifesto?

We have newly introduced an anonymous feedback form for committee members to report to the SHO.

What do you hope to achieve by your next report?

Get on with wellbeing week planning.

Conduct monthly sexual health info sessions in collaboration with NHS.

Any events or opportunities that you would like other members to know about?

No response submitted.

SRC Widening Access and Participation Officer – Ramsay Bader

No response submitted.