



Papers for SRC Meeting

24th January 2023 – Large Rehearsal Room– 18:00

Contents of Papers:

1. Report from the Director of Wellbeing and Equality
2. Reports from Councilors
3. Draft of the new strategy for the University of St Andrews' Students' Association (Supplied separately)

Report from the Director of Wellbeing and Equality

CW: Mentions of sexual and gender-based violence and suicide

SGBV work

Emily Test Site Visit

Representatives of the Emily Test came to St Andrews on Friday 20 January, following from their previous visit in October. They had planned to run a small student focus group, which I was arranging on their behalf, but they had to cancel this at the last minute for safety reasons. To all of the students who had signed up, I offered alternative ways to provide feedback for the Emily Test charter submission and to get involved in SGBV work in St Andrews.

I did attend a staff working group, where I provided student voice, including specific feedback shared by students who would have attended the focus group. The Emily Test staff led us through all the minimum standards for the charter and we discussed where St Andrews is at in meeting and submitting evidence for those standards, including: barriers to having options for BAME students to request meeting with Student Services staff from similar backgrounds and other specialised support, trying to find the best ways to reach students with information about GBV policy and support upon first arrival in St Andrews, transparency and expectation setting to help students make informed decisions about reporting and reaching out for support, and support for students involved in sex work.

LISTEN training for wardens

One of the Emily Test charter requirements is GBV education for staff and students. Emily Test have created their LISTEN training, which is an evidence-based risk assessment tool and conversation guide designed to be used in colleges and universities in Scotland. LISTEN provides a framework so staff and people receiving disclosures of GBV can best support the disclosing student, taking a trauma-informed approach.

On 10 January, hall Wardens were trained in LISTEN, and I observed the training along with staff from Student Services and the Wellbeing & Equality Co-ordinator to see exactly what the training entails and how it overlaps with existing trainings for students.

I thought the training went very well, many of the wardens actively participated, challenged and clarified existing policies, and seemed to learn new things. I was especially happy to see the training account for neurodivergence within guidance on how to talk to students and use active listening (e.g. not everyone will want or hold eye contact); remind people to use consent-based phrases to soften their questions ("are you able to" "would you be comfortable"); and encourage people to say "end your life" or "die by suicide" rather than "commit" suicide (perpetuates stigma of suicide as a crime you can "commit").

Because the training is designed more generically to be used across different institutions, some of the points did contradict or cause confusion around St Andrews-specific policies for wardens, which was one of my main concerns about implementing the LISTEN training here. However, these problem points during the training sparked conversations, got people thinking about best practice and whether we are able to help students in the ways they need, and highlighted areas where staff may not be interpreting and implementing policies in the same ways. The Director of Student Services also held a session with the wardens immediately after the training, where she clarified questions that had come up and went over policy and procedures, which I think is necessary as a follow-up to a training that can't include much information that is specific to St Andrews. Overall, I think this training works well for staff, but our existing MHAP training is a lot more suited for training student leaders to handle disclosures.

SGBV Forum

If you are ever interested in attending the SGBV Forum, just let me know and I can add you to the Team.

On 11 December 2022 I reconvened the SGBV Forum, with attendees from different relevant student groups (including SRC officers). We got into a lot of productive discussions prompted both by staff requests for me to get student input and students' own priorities, including: what kinds of statistics we might like to see in a University report of SGBV figures (outcomes and satisfaction); being contacted by Student Services when students just want help with an academic issue; what kinds of training do

Student Services staff receive for supporting LGBT and disabled students; lack of focus on / resources for domestic abuse; and debriefing the recent Reclaim the Night march and week of events.

On 17 January we had the first SGBV Forum meeting of the semester mainly focused on continuing our debrief of Reclaim the Night (RTN) with more of the relevant students present, and Lesley Caldwell, Community Engagement and Social Responsibility Officer from the University, also attended by invite from the students. We discussed options to build upon the results and engagement with the map of St Andrews that students were invited during RTN to put red, yellow or green stickers on to mark where they felt safe or unsafe in town. We also got into wider conversations about student safety and explored with Lesley options for giving students more open opportunities to raise concerns and discuss safety issues (break-ins, unlit paths, harassment by local businesses) directly with staff.

On 24 January the forum will convene again, with Sarah Browne, new Project Officer for Student Services, attending for the first few minutes just to introduce herself and inform everyone that she is working on a new SGBV Policy for students that would be distinct from the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy. The rest of the meeting will focus on early planning stages for April's Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM). Anyone interested in helping out with SAAM can get in touch and I will add you to the Team!

Cost of Living

My work with the Cost of Living Taskforce continues. I am pleased to report that over the winter break, vouchers for groceries and to support local businesses were made available to students who remained in town.

The University have created a [Cost of Living webpage](#) which will be kept up to date with the latest support provision, and details of financial support. There is also a new [interactive map](#) of campus to show where you can find warm spaces, kitchen facilities, and showers. From the Union side, Holly and I continue to update the [Cost of Living Guide](#) on a regular basis. Most recent updates reflect the UK Chancellor's Autumn Statement, the Scottish Budget, and some of the community provision of warm spaces across Fife, Dundee, and Angus Councils.

Communications with students

Back in December I put together content for a "[Here over the Holidays](#)" webpage, which was formatted and uploaded to the Union website by our Design and Marketing Team and Web Coordinator. The content outlined events, community activities, opening times, and support available over the festive period for students remaining in town to be aware and stay connected. I also helped University staff members in creating their all-student communications ahead of the festive break, to make sure they were clear to understand.

Supporting Officers

I always prioritise the officers and student leaders I oversee, and I have set aside time in Week 2 to meet with any of them who would like to have a start-of-semester catchup. I plan to let the officers use these sessions however they need, which may include goal setting and progress tracking, reflecting on how last semester went and what to continue or do differently this semester, practical support for committee management or planning for upcoming events and themed weeks, and connecting them with relevant Union and University members for issues or projects they want to work on. If you're one of my officers, please do [sign up](#) for a meeting slot!

Representing students

Learning and Teaching Committee Away Day

The DoEd arranged for myself and several academic student reps to attend the daylong meeting of this University academic staff committee to provide student input about Extensions Policies, since we were not given enough notice to arrange for wider student consultation. In preparation, we met with a small group of available academic reps to hear feedback from different schools, and I represented this input throughout the Away Day, including: need for better distribution of deadlines across the year and across schools; unclear guidelines on how personal and detailed extension requests need to be; inconsistent application of extensions policies across and even within schools; unsustainability of relying on engagement with oversubscribed Student Services to substantiate extension requests; lack of trust for students; and challenging why extensions ever need to be denied.

The DoEd and I presented these general themes to the room, and then we broke into smaller groups with one student rep in each, where we were tasked with reading over real, redacted examples of emails requesting extensions or deferrals and discussing how they should be handled. The question I had to keep asking to challenge staff members' mindsets about extensions was: But where is the harm in granting the extension? My main takeaways from this exercise were that: there is extreme variability in how different teaching staff respond to extension requests; teaching staff were very reluctant to empathise with commuting students, were uninformed about the accommodation situation in St Andrews, and (more positively) most were open to hearing student input.

Diverse Theme Action Planning Workshop

In December, stakeholders involved in EDI work across the University community came together to discuss the Diverse Pillar of the University's Strategy, brainstorming ideas and issues with each action point, and evaluating each section for its predicted cost, time length, and priority level. I challenged what engagement with charter work should look like – rather than “securing” charter status (which was listed under one of the action points), it should be about using charters as tools to evaluate where we are at and hold us accountable to constantly work to improve. I also suggested joining up staff-led work with student-focused projects, particularly looking into where staff could come to existing student spaces instead of creating new staff committees that create more workload for invited student members.

Athena Swan Self-Assessment Team

The Athena Swan Charter is a framework to make Higher Education more equitable for all genders. Currently the University overall holds the Bronze Award, with some individual schools holding Silver and even Gold Awards.

On 6 December, the SAT met in person for a long workshop to discuss and record enablers, blockers, existing work and existing issues along five different focus areas of the charter. I joined the breakout group for the fifth topic, “tackling behaviours and cultures that detract from the safety and collegiality of our work and study environments.” One big takeaway from this meeting was how the concept of “collegiality” is understood across different generations and whether it has a place in our institution. To summarise, University colleagues in my group defined collegiality as picking up tasks outside your remit that need to get done, helping out colleagues when they are overworked, and, as an example, not being the kind of person who takes research leave every couple of years while other colleagues rarely do. I took issue with this concept, because each of the issues that seems to require “collegiality” should actually be addressed at the institutional and departmental level. We should be looking at why certain staff are being overworked, and solutions like hiring additional staff, reducing the responsibilities of the role, or dropping projects that there aren't enough resources to get done. We should be looking at why certain staff never take their research leave (I found out in some schools this may be because staff are required to find colleagues to cover their teaching responsibilities before they can take this leave, which disadvantages those with weaker relationships with colleagues, or who don't feel comfortable asking that of their peers), and eliminating some of those barriers so that they can take more leave, rather than judging those who are already able to do so.

I suggested that there may be a generational difference where younger people are more empowered to set boundaries in the workplace and do exactly as much as they are paid for, not letting their colleagues or work culture pressure them into working overtime or taking on extra tasks outside the remit of the job they were hired to do—an approach that I fully support.

Goals looking forward Handover

A good handover makes a huge difference especially when coming into such a big role, so I will be spending a lot of my non-meeting time this semester working on assembling a comprehensive handover to set the next DoWell up for success. I want to include unfinished or in-progress projects or ideas from my officers to hopefully ensure a smooth transition for my successor to support your successors in continuing upon your work from this year.

Period Products

The Union has a stock of reusable period products, but we cannot run stalls to hand them out to students (for free) until we can get student volunteers trained with knowledge about periods and the

products to be qualified to run the stalls. This has been at a big standstill because I have tried multiple times to get in touch with Hey Girls, the company that supplies our reusable products, to try and arrange training, and have not been able to get a reply from them.

This semester I am going to follow up with them again and explore alternatives for training outside of Hey Girls—I am determined to make these products available to students before my term is over! As soon as I am able to make some sort of arrangements for a training, I will offer it up to members of the Wellbeing Subcommittee and GotConsent, as those are the groups responsible for the stalls, and will also extend the training offer to any keen SRC members who would like to help out, as I know there has been interest raised in past discussions.

SGBV Expectations and Transparency

I have been working on SGBV issues in St Andrews for the last three years, and there are certain lines of feedback I hear all the time from students, particularly around knowing what to expect from the reporting process and what is expected of you. Among other things, there have been specific requests to have on the website a bullet point list of possible outcomes of a sexual misconduct disciplinary case, and a bullet point list of examples for the kinds of evidence that could be submitted. Student Services and Student Conduct staff have been open to these ideas, but it just hasn't quite happened yet. I would really like to help assemble this information and push for it to be made available.

SRC REPORTS

SRC Alumni Officer – Aditya Goel

What have you done since the last meeting/report?

I have contacted Alumni for collaborations with the committee.

I have built a LinkedIn page of the committee and I am building the network of St Andrews Alumni through it.

What progress has been made on your manifesto?

I am hosting weekly meetings with my team as the semester starts and work on hosting an Alumni in St Andrews with the help of Alumni Relations Office.

What do you hope to achieve by your next report?

I hope to achieve a positive response from our Alumni so that we can host a talk with them for the students of the University.

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

No response submitted

SRC Arts and Divinity Faculty President – Francesca Jane Lavelle

What have you done since the last meeting/report?

- Published School President Submissions to the Journal
- Emailed SPs regarding the journal and determining submission dates/submission criteria
- Met with EduExec about progress made last semester, reviewed our plans for this semester, and reflected on what we want to do differently/improve upon
- Met with SPs
- Messaged with SPs about issues with class reps, school admin, and various other queries
- Had UAF, EduCom, and EduExec meetings
- Reviewed my plans for the semester/manifesto

What progress has been made on your manifesto?

- Pprogress on the journal!
- Continuing to support SPs and LCs

What do you hope to achieve by your next report?

I would love to have received more submissions to the journal and made some progress on a handover document for new SPs

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

N/A

SRC BAME Officer – Yuyu Jasmin Zheng

No response submitted.

SRC Charities Officer – Alice Chapman

What have you done since the last meeting/report?

Since the last meeting, I have been checking up on the progress of my subcommittees, making sure that everyone is ready for a busy Semester 2. We have Race2, CATWALK and RAG week coming up in the next few months and I've been focused on making sure that everyone is on

track and making sure that I am available for people to ask for help. I've also been making my committee aware of the Convenor position nomination that will be coming up in February and started planning our annual charity nominations and Gives Back awards.

What progress has been made on your manifesto?

I am heavily focusing on the publicity of RAG week to get as many people as possible involved in the amazing activities that we have planned.

What do you hope to achieve by your next report?

I hope to have the RA and budget for Race2 sorted out by the next meeting and have had a successful RAG week.

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

RAG week is next week! We have so many great activities planned so please do advertise it and also come along and join in.

SRC Community Relations Officer – Mashaim Bukhari

What have you done since the last meeting/report?

For events, I was focusing on organising the BAMEfest and FUSE night over the winter break with my committee members. A draft schedule for BAMEfest is made and will be confirmed this week. Besides, we organised an end of semester distress hot drink sale. In addition, I worked with the REC working group on promoting the REC survey.

What progress has been made on your manifesto?

I am working with my committee members to finalise the BAME students' handbook, it will be releasing as physical copies during BAMEfest.

What do you hope to achieve by your next report?

Organised BAMEfest and have concrete plan for the FUSE night.

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

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

What have you done since the last meeting/report?

- Meetings with Student Services Director and Staff regarding Report and Support
- Meetings with SS staff regarding student support and gender identity resources
- Began operations for Gender Equality Week with SaintsLGBT and FemSoc
- Collaborating with other Scottish Universities on student sex worker support
- Booking venues for Gender Equality Week with SaintsLGBT president
- Preparing information for future Gender Equality Officer candidates
- Still waiting to hear back from Sexpression and Got Consent about their resources
- Meeting with SS regarding spiking information

What progress has been made on your manifesto?

- Working with SS on Report+Support and other resources

- Working on student SW support
- Event coordination
- Inquiring into spiking cases and reporting process

What do you hope to achieve by your next report?

- Gather Sexpression and Got Consent resources
- Issue a student SW statement
- Prep GEW events
- Run a Union staff survey regarding spiking

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

Gender Equality Week is coming up 13th-19th February, any and all officers are welcome to join in on organising, the more the merrier, just send me a message or an email at rn53.

SRC International Students' Officer – Raghav Kediya

What have you done since the last meeting/report?

Attended wellbeing and equality forum meets.

What progress has been made on your manifesto?

N/A

What do you hope to achieve by your next report?

Look into social media and events for the role.

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?

I have represented the Postgraduate Student Representation system at Postgraduate Visitor's day, have attended PGRCs, LTCs, AMGs. In addition, we conducted PGR Forum on 14 November, PGT Forum on 29th November, and PG Academic Forum on 13 December. I've attended meetings with Library Stakeholders to discuss the progress and impacts for PG students of the Main Library redevelopment project. At LTC Away Day on 7 December, we discussed with DoTs how extenuating circumstances and marking descriptors impact postgraduate study in St Andrews and have highlighted how Academic Monitoring had highlighted that PGT students seem to be requesting more extension requests than in previous years. I have forwarded concerns about deadline planning from PGT Forum to the Provost's office and we continue to discuss how deadlines can be managed more efficiently on the university's part. On 14 December, I attended my first meeting of Senate. Overall, we are continuing discussions about the development of Old Burgh School and St Leonard's College with the POs office. Lastly, I have met with the deputy director of the Interdisciplinary Graduate School to discuss how the School can support PGR students who work across different disciplines. Additionally, we want to continue these conversations to explore whether an interdisciplinary PhD programme can and should be developed considering the university's long-term strategy.

What progress has been made on your manifesto?

St Leonard's College has hired an Executive Officer which allows a deeper exploration of financial and administrative possibilities to support postgraduate study. The officers has

started in January and I have since met with him to discuss how postgraduate student representation can and should be involved in any planning initiatives the college sets out. These were productive meetings which enable a closer collaboration between postgraduate student representation and the activities/support offered by STLC.

What do you hope to achieve by your next report?

Finalise development plans for OBS in consultancy with Provost's office and STLC, continue to investigate the impact of PGRs financial situation on academic performance, contribute feedback to the SA's strategy plans particularly regarding postgraduate engagement, advertise and promote the upcoming student representative elections.

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

If you have postgraduate students in your committees, please feel free to remind them that there are a number of postgraduate roles available at the next elections.

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

No response submitted.

SRC Widening Access and Participation Officer – Ramsay Bader

No response submitted.