



PGT Forum

St Andrews Students Association

Meeting date: Tuesday 24th February 2026 (15:30-17:00)
Small Rehearsal Room (Student Union Building)

GENERAL INFORMATION

Meeting called by: PGT President - Pierluigi Maffi

Type of Meeting: PGT Forum

Chair: PGT President - Pierluigi Maffi

Note Taker(s): Postgraduate Representation Intern - Rhiannon Cadelle

ATTENDANCE

Attendees: PGT President - Pierluigi Maffi, President of Education - Emily Bannister, Academic Rep Co-ordinator - Amy McLaughlin, Postgraduate Representation Intern - Rhiannon Cadelle, MSc Marine Mammal Science Rep - Shreya Vinodh, MSc Marine Ecosystem Management Rep - Marc Bonnot, MSc Finance Rep - Janhvi Mukerjee, MSc Economics Rep - Veronica Semprini, Neurosciences PGT Rep - Bradley Teal, MLitt Gender Studies Rep - Meily Denys, MSc Energy Policy and Finance Rep - Julia Hyman, MLitt Art History Rep - Natalia Ramirez, MSc Health Data Science - Federica Maestri, MSc Animal Behaviour Rep - Giulia Pipolo, MLitt Comparative Literature Rep - Natalia Roguz.

Online: N/A

Apologies: MLitt International Political Theory - Sydney Dwyer, English MLitt Rep - Kaitlyn Mann, MLitt International Security Studies - Claire Chahbandour, MLitt Strategic Studies Rep - Kyle Tucker, MSc Finance and Management Rep - Sierra Dunbar, MLitt International Business Rep - Naomi Gibb, MSc Entrepreneurship - Sarah Shaefer, MLitt Museum and Heritage Studies Rep - Angharad Jones, MLitt Global Social and Political Thought AV Rep - Katherine Orr, MLitt Marketing Rep - Shannon Armstrong, MSc Geochemistry Rep - Julian Asher, MLitt Divinity Rep - Anastasia Corkery, MRes Anthropology Rep - Maria-Christina Kyprianou

Absences: MLitt Museum and Heritage Studies Rep - Angharad Jones, MLitt Peace Building and Mediation Rep - Jessica Black, MSc Finance and Economics Rep - Hanno Eilers, MLitt International Security Studies Rep - Claire Chahbandour, MLitt Management Rep - Shahrbanou Ismail, MLitt Strategic Studies Rep - Kyle Tucker, Film Studies PGT Rep - Isabella Armus, MSc Computer Science Rep - Muhammad Sarfaraz, English MLitt Rep - Kaitlyn Mann, MLitt International Business Rep - Naomi Gibb, MLitt International Business Rep - Lukas Buser, MSc Entrepreneurship - Sarah Shaefer, Statistics PGT Rep - Jack Nowacek, MLitt Philosophy Rep - Jess Walsh, MSc Astrophysics Rep - Charlotte Bosma, MLitt Art History Rep - Alida Kruger, PGT Chemistry Rep - Robert Gabriel Beraru, PGT Classics Rep - Joshua Woodley, MSc Environmental Science Rep - Lily Kermit, Earth Sciences MGeol - Klara Macaulay, MSc Finance Rep - Ryan Marett, History PGT Rep - Gabriel Baker, MLitt Terrorism and Political Violence - Rachel Dugan, MSc Finance and Management Rep - Sierra Kristine Dunbar, MSc Finance and Management Rep - Cameron Hamson, MSc Banking and Finance Rep Gabriel Ricardo Vargas Berroa, MSc Banking and Finance Rep - Damien Guerra Rodriguez, Mathematics PGT Rep - Axel Tardelle, Health Professions Education - Maya Gallagher, Psychology PGT Rep - Evelin Greta Csabai, MSc Global Sustainable Development Rep - Carolyn O'Donnel, TESOL PGT Rep - Chayanut Visawakonkal, MSc International Education Rep - Abigail Shusterman.

Guests: Art and Divinity Faculty President - Maya Fenyk. Science and Medicine Faculty President - Ariane O'Rourke

Agenda

I. Welcome and Introduction

PGT President introduces the first PGT forum for Semester 2.

II. PGT President Updates

Beacon Bar

PGT President announced continued working on opening Beacon Bar as a PG space on Thursday evenings. Should be open the week after reading week. Weeks will alternate, with one week being catered to a late night, such as between 8pm-12am, and the following week for 5pm-10pm for a chill bar atmosphere. The plan was to cater to all PGs. Based on this trial, it is possible that this could continue throughout the summer, when only PGs are in St Andrews.

PGT Rep Lunch Forum

PGT President - This is the first time we have done this. There will be a lunch in Parliament Hall, with a talk from the Careers centre, looking at what PGs can do after their masters; the event will be held on 17th March. Please respond to the invitation before 1st March to confirm attendance. If you can only make part of the event, that is fine also but still RSVP.

Dissertation Meeting Feedback

PGT President - This was an issue raised last semester as there is not much clarity and Schools are treating dissertations differently University wide. We have spoken with staff; we hope to have more clarity for next year so future students do not have these issues.

III. Union Executive Member's Updates

One Union Awards

President of Education informed Reps of the One Union Awards, which recognises volunteers, including representatives. There are several awards to be nominated for, and you can self nominate. There is a specific award for Outstanding PG Rep, all PG reps are eligible!

Teaching Awards

Teaching Awards are also open for nominations. Make sure to nominate any teacher for our awards on the Union website, nominations close 13th March. If your nomination is successful, you will be invited to present an award to a teacher. Rhiannon will be reaching out soon to ask for volunteers on the selection panel for shortlisting, which will take place from 19th March onwards. We need PG voices!

Elections

Elections were launched today, make sure you vote! PG Reps can run for the Executive Officer roles for after their studies, there are five positions on offer.

End of Semester Report

If you have not sent anything in, please get in touch with Rhiannon ASAP, as we need to send the report to the University.

Funding

MSc Marine Mammal Science Rep - A general question about the Class Education Fund, where can I find this to apply for it?

President of Education will put a link in the Teams channel. Funds that are managed by the President of Education are the Grant to Education, the School President Fund (which PGs can apply for), and one other. The Graduate School does have funding but the Union does not oversee this money, you should apply regardless! All Schools should have their own pot of money too.

IV. Representatives Issues and Advice

Updates

MSc Economics Rep

Economics has merged with the School of Management; there have been many problems with protocols not fitting Finance and Economics. The biggest issue is the dissertation. There is a module that was created for the dissertation for Finance, Economics, and Management with weekly lectures in the first semester. In Semester 2, there was suppose to be separate lectures for Economics, Finance and Management but the Economics lectures were cancelled. There is no support for the Economics dissertation. This issue was brought up at the SSCC last week but

not satisfied with lack of action. No official email has been sent out for the cancellation of the Economics lectures, causing confusion amongst students. Finding supervisors has also caused some issues as students have been told not to speak with researchers that we are interested in having as supervisors, however lecturers have told us to go to office hours and talk about potential topics. However, no students have topics for their dissertations due to this. An extension may be useful but only if a solution is provided.

I have spoken to the DoPGT and the Vice Dean of Education for the School, and both agree it would be fairer to have a protocol in place for dissertation support for all.

PGT President has spoken with Jacqueline and she has looked into it. They do have a policy for the merge, and she has said that they are not implementing it.

President of Education is on the email chain for the Department, with a lot of arguments taking place. President of Education will work with PGT President to offer improvements to the School. It may be necessary for a higher up from the University to come in.

MSc Marine Mammal Science Rep

Dissertation proposals are in. Have not received any complaints.

MSc Marine Ecosystem Management Rep

For the School of Biology, most proposals are in and seeking supervisors has been fine. There has been some complaints about lack of field trips, but I have spoken to the Head of School and we will work on this.

MLitt Gender Studies Rep

The main thing is that students are asking for more options for the elective module, as the choices are very limited. There are a lot of lecturers from IR, there is not a great variety of lecturers who are not specialising in Gender Studies.

MSc Health Data Science Rep

Little issues which have been improved on by speaking directly with the Professors.

MSc Animal Behaviour Rep

School is running smoothly. Proposals are in. All issues are solved immediately within.

MLitt Art History Rep

There have been a couple of issues regarding the summer programme in Paris. It was advertised as 3 weeks, and an elective opportunity. It is very competitive and has been difficult to get a place. The trip is actually only 11 days. Some students enrolled to this MLitt specifically for this opportunity, there has been a lot of frustration. Dissertation proposals are in, however there was an issue where students were not told what lecturers were not available and so some have reworked their topics to suit the lecturers available for supervision.

Energy Policy and Finance Rep

The School is on top of things. We have been working closely with the faculty and meet regularly to resolve issues. We would like more contact hours and this will be changed for next years' cohort. It is good to see feedback turning into action. Our optional modules are quite spread out, so students have less interaction with each other. There is a field trip this semester which students are looking forward to.

MRes Neuroscience Rep

Everything is good. We have organised a conference with Glasgow and Edinburgh, we have 60 people signed up.

MSc Finance Rep

There is one compulsory module in Semester 2 that is almost identical to what was covered in the Semester 1 compulsory module. We have tried to address this with the module co-ordinator and the programme co-ordinator, no one wants to take responsibility. It feels like a waste of our time and effort, and not to mention the fees we have paid not to learn something new. Module codes are F15612, and F15602 (Sem 1 module). We have been directed to several different people who continues to refer us elsewhere, our DoPGT has also been contacted but is not responding.

President of Education recommended Jacequeline, the Associate Provost of Education who manages curriculums so they do not overlap. President of Education will reach out to them. There is also the Associate Dean for Curriculum, who covers more undergraduate issues but does look at overlap, so could be one to reach out to. There is a committee, Strategic Curriculum Approval group, that the President of Education is on, that approves modules and sees if there is overlap.

Action Points

- Contact Associate Provost of Education
- Contact Associate Dean for Curriculum
- Bring up as agenda point for Strategic Curriculum Approval Group

Rep was not able to attend SSCC but forwarded some agenda points for discussion. MSc Economics Rep notes that no specific feedback was provided in the meeting.

MLitt Comparative Literature

Everything is good now, no real issues. We did get a new co-ordinator and there has been better communication.

VI Any Other Business

Academic Rep Co-ordinator asked for feedback on the mid Semester Feedback Forms and being able to circulate them.

MLitt Comparative Literature

Other than the comment section, it does not capture the issues people are having. For other concerns I am usually texted, or emailed or asked in person.

Consensus reached that group chats have been the most effective mode of communication.

MLitt Art History noted that they have not received a lot of feedback from the optional survey except for strong opinions or negative experiences.

President of Education asked if Rep has noticed anything effecting PGs University wide.

Consensus that community is always an issue. But there is excitement for Beacon Bar as a response to this.

Meeting ended 16:18pm.