

Motion to Support Name Blind Applications

Owner- Zoe Ruki

In Effect- Immediately

Review Date- 19/11/20

Councils Notes

1. On the 5th of July 2019, an Open Letter was issued to Principal Sally Mapstone calling for name blind applications to be made available in St Andrews.
2. The open letter received numerous signatures, with the organisers claiming 80% of BME students at St Andrews supported it.
3. The Universities of Huddersfield, Exeter, Liverpool and Winchester have all trialled name blind applications in order to promote greater racial equality.
4. Name blind applications were a key recommendation of the 2016 Bridge Report, issued by the UK Government in order to improve social mobility.
5. Point 6 of the "Diverse St Andrews" section of the University Strategy 2018-2023 has stated that "greater racial and ethnic diversity" is a priority for the University.
6. The Assistant Vice Principal for Diversity has recently created a working group on name blind applications which will include the Association President, the Director of Wellbeing, the Director of Education and the SRC Member for Racial Equality.

Believes

1. While the reasons for racial inequalities are complex and nuanced, name blind applications would help address the problem.
2. The support shown by students- and BME students in particular- for the Open Letter shows that the introduction of name-blind applications would be firmly in-step with student opinion.
3. The organisers of the open letter should be praised for showing initiative, and leadership on this important issue.

Resolves

1. To enthusiastically endorse the proposals called for in the open letter (attached)
2. To support the University on any of it's work on widening access in general, and improving racial disparities in particular.
3. To share it's support for the open letter and the proposals therein on its social media channels.

Proposed:

Zoe Nengite- SRC Member for Racial Equality

Seconded:

Flora Smith- Student's Association Director of Wellbeing

Jamie Rodney- Student's Association President

Shaina Sullivan- Student's Association Director of Student Development and Activities

Amy Bretherton- Students Association Director of Education

Appendix A: Text of the Open Letter

Despite the clear evidence presented, the ease of making such a change and the lack of any reason not to, the University has refused to make any changes to its admissions policy.

Name-blind applications are the only way to ensure that BME students applying to St Andrews aren't affected by the subconscious biases that could inadvertently hold back students with 'ethnic' sounding names.

If we can show them that the St Andrews community resolutely supports a change in the University's admissions policy then this is not something they can ignore.

With your help we hope that we can change an admissions policy that unfairly impacts BME students who strive to earn their place at our University.