



Undergraduate Academic Forum 2022-23

23rd March, 6.30pm

- Large Rehearsal Room, St Andrews Students' Union

These minutes present a record of what was said during the meeting. They are more extensive than other meeting notes you might encounter, to aid future student representatives in their advocacy. We believe this will help lay groundwork, so progress is not impeded by the high turnover rate that is inherent to student representation. Actions and follow-up points are highlighted for comfort.

Thank you to all who took the time to attend, and please reach out to [doed@](mailto:doed@st-and.ac.uk) with corrections or questions.

With very best wishes for next year,
Noah and Education Committee

- **Present:**
- Kiki Aggarwal (School President for International Relations)
- Carol Ballinger (School President for Physics & Astronomy)
- Tom Bender (School President for Classics)
- Kirsty Bentley (School President for Chemistry)
- Robbie Carnegie (School President for Medicine)
- Yasmin Chowdry (Spanish Convenor)
- Federica Consiglio (Comparative Literature Convenor)
- Maggie Crookston (School President for Management)
- Rosa Fricker (School President for History)
- Zoë Gemmell (School President for Maths & Statistics)
- Patricia Helpap (School President for Earth and Environmental Sciences)
- Martyna Kemeklytė (Faculty President Science & Medicine)
- Laurence Lamonde-Mercier (School President for Divinity)
- Francesca Lavelle (Faculty President Arts & Divinity)
- Catherine Mullner (School President for English)
- Quinn Murphy (French Convenor)
- Anne Moorhouse (School President for Art History)
- Dan Ross (School President for Modern Languages)
- Noah Schott (Director of Education)
- Claire Shortt (School President for Music)
- Syna Singh (School President for Economics & Finance)
- Anna Smith (School President for Philosophy)
- Ava True (School President for Biology)
- Robbie Wallace (School President for Computer Science)

Toni Andres (Academic Representation Intern)

- Chase Greenfield (Academic Representation Coordinator)
- Ros Claase (Director of Student Experience)
- Frank Müller (AVP Dean of Learning and Teaching)
- Clare Peddie (Proctor)
- Gerald Prescott (Associate Dean Education, Science)
- Brian Kin Ting Ho (Academic Policy Officer)

In attendance:

Hitanshi Badani (incoming Faculty President for Arts & Divinity)
 Olivia Benbow (incoming School President for History)
 Cam Brown (incoming Director of Education)
 Krish Chaudhary (incoming School President for Maths & Stats)
 Iain Cupples (Student Advocate, Education)
 Sandro Eich (Postgraduate Academic Convenor)
 Sam Gorman (Director of Student Development and Activities)
 Matthew Ko (incoming Faculty President Science & Medicine)
 Serena Mundy (incoming School President for Art History)
 River Stilwell (incoming School President for English)
 Juan Pablo Rodríguez (President of the Students' Association)

Chair: Noah Schott

Minutes: Toni Andres

Welcome and Introductions to those in attendance

- Noah announces that incoming officers for 2023-34 are attending the meeting. Staff in attendance introduce themselves.
- Noah thanks everyone for attending.
- Officers should introduce themselves when they speak.
- Noah highlights the new structure of the forum, mainly that the agenda consists of one topic proposed by student officers and one item proposed by members of university staff.

Academic Calendar

- Noah re-introduces 2021-22 report that gathered student experiences with the changes to the academic calendar structure (see UAF meeting minutes 1st December 2022).
- Clare Peddie (Proctor) outlines reasoning behind the changes: EDI concerns from staff and students were raised when Claire came into office and that affected the changes. The new calendar has been in place for 2 years. **A steering group will be formed next academic year (2023-24) to review the constraints of the academic calendar** (i.e. A-level results, Christmas, examinations, exam re-sits and deferrals). Clare emphasises the sustainability policy, student travel, equity and access, and the new Students' Association strategy as factors to take into account. The idea of the main group is that there will be 3-4 models that will be considered. Claire emphasises that the nature of this discussion is that compromises have to be made, as all stakeholders have different priorities. The point is to get feedback which will then be brought to Senate for consideration in September. Other Universities will be investigated as well (esp. bearing in mind sports). Claire emphasises the importance of academics to fit into the general academic calendar structure for academic conferences etc.
 - o Martyna (FP Science & Medicine): who will be in the group and who makes final decision? Clare (Proctor) answers: students will be involved in the steering

group, but Senate is the body that makes final decision. Faculty EDI staff will also be consulted.

- Noah invites student officers to respond to Clare (Proctor)
 - o Carol (SP Physics & Astronomy): it has been raised by students that moving spring break by a week this academic year led to very positive feedback and made a great big impact on student wellbeing. The greatest impact on wellbeing currently is the shortened winter break, as students, especially project students, are severely affected by the smaller amount of time which leads to people feeling like they cannot get the work done and which leads to burnout. This also pushes exams grade release into the semester which affects courses that have prerequisite grades. Furthermore, student reps expressed that they felt unable to recover during the winter break.
 - Clare (Proctor) asks if adding another week to the winter break, reducing revision time of Semester 2 by one week, would help? Carol expresses feeling unqualified to answer this question but feels protective over the two weeks of revision. Carol points out that the University of Edinburgh also has two weeks of revision.
 - Clare agrees and adds that this has also been cited by members of staff. Clare emphasises that Edinburgh also does not release grades until halfway through the semester.
 - Carol asks for more availability of student services, giving academic staff more time and instructions to adapt semester timings. Carol points out that the Junior Honours year in Physics is notoriously work-heavy even prior to the academic calendar changes which was not re-adjusted in correspondence with the shortened semester. With less time, assessments and workload has grown disproportionately because courses were built for a slightly longer second semester.
 - Clare thanks Carol for the insight.
 - o Gerald (Associate Dean Education, Science) emphasises the discrepancy that sometimes happens between changes on paper and reality. Gerald points out that, although the semester has become shorter, teaching time remained the same. Gerald emphasises that students are not expected to be working during spring break or winter break.
 - Kirsty (SP Chemistry) adds that it is difficult to fit in work for dissertation students who are also sitting exams. Spring break is crucial for catching a break.
 - Kiki (SP International Relations) adds that many deadlines are set immediately after the spring break which is why students tend to work during spring break.
 - o Frank adds that deadlines immediately after Spring Break may be a remnant from old course constructions, as two weeks of Spring Break would have made those deadlines feasible. This is not intended to be punitive and to strip people of relaxation. Frank encourages Kiki to reach out to the DoT about this to readjust it. Frank adds that the time from Christmas to summer needs to be stretched further and relaxation and revision redistributed.
 - o Kiki (SP International Relations) expresses understanding. Kiki points out that for IR, these sorts of structures are particularly visible in various Honours modules. It is difficult for student reps to advocate on tackling this issue of deadlines structurally and not in particular.

- Noah: is that something that is realistic for staff to do? Is that something that should go past the individual module basis and be done as a large review?
 - Gerald: covid was a time when massive change was enforced. We've always had a very clear process of curriculum development. Various committees drive that process. Understandably, people are tired and it may be difficult to pick up pace but they're working on it.
- Noah asks Gerald (Associate Dean Education, Science): do you think that changes that we expected were affected since the calendar was written before the COVID-19 pandemic?
 - Gerald answers: 'We do not always get it right and there is a process of constant reflection.' Gerald encourages everyone to keep sitting down with DoTs and Module Coordinators to figure out challenges; the dialogue is crucial, especially considering that big changes are underway (i.e. around AI in learning, teaching and assessment).
- Clare (Proctor) points out that one factor in the reasoning for changing the academic calendar was the intention to finish examination in the first semester as soon as possible for travel reasons. Clare points out that St Andrews is the only university in Scotland that has a Spring Break, while Edinburgh has an Independent Learning Week in Semester 2. Other universities also have no revision time in Semester 2. Clare points out that by comparison the current calendar looks better than those of other universities.
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- Quinn (French Convenor) relates that in the SSCC meeting for French, staff brought up that they had been sent emails with questions about deadlines during Winter Break which were time-pressing, although staff themselves were on break. Quinn asks: Is there a policy about deadlines immediately after break?
 - Frank (AVP Dean of Learning and Teaching) answers that there is a policy that prohibits deadlines during revision week. Frank emphasises that at some point deadlines do need to take place but Frank promises to take this issue further.
- Emma (SP Psychology & Neuroscience) asks: is there an option to shorten the summer by a week and keep both two weeks of revision and two weeks of Spring Break in Semester 2?
 - Clare (Proctor) points out that graduation would have to be rescheduled by a week. The reason why the semester now finishes earlier is due to EDI requests. Staff raised that the spring break did not coincide with school holidays and that they were unable to spend the Easter holidays with their families which now falls in revision time.
 - Madeleine (German Convenor) points out that staff are having to work right up until Christmas which is also a family holiday due to the shortened winter break.
 - Clare (Proctor) expresses understanding. Clare points out that there are no fewer marking days between the semesters than before.
 - Gerald (Associate Dean Education, Science) points out that a vast majority of workers in the UK only get home for lunch time on Christmas Eve, whereas staff at the University have time off from Christmas until the 1st January.
- Fran (FP Arts & Divinity) raises that something that is taken for granted is that all attendees have this knowledge of reasons behind the changes which is not reflective of the general student body. Fran points out that it may be worth sharing this information on why the academic calendar was changed to remind students of the complexity of this issue.
 - Clare (Proctor) answers that one of the tasks of the future focus group will be planning communication. The priority will be to convey the message that there

- is a certain number of weeks in the year; shifting those in the academic calendar around will always hurt some party.
- Noah (Director of Education) expresses appreciation for hearing the comparison to other universities' academic calendar structures which points to aspects that do and that do not work. Noah points out the importance of hearing experiences from non-academic staff as well to take into account.
 - Emma (SP Psychology & Neuroscience) raises that a lot of students are expecting to participate in May Dip which is now in the middle of exam season.
 - Kirsty adds that these traditions are a great part of the St Andrews experience and students have expressed being upset at not being able to participate in them.
 - Catherine (SP English): appreciates the amount of work that has gone into the shaping of the calendar. Catherine raises that marking and feedback have been returned late to students throughout the academic year. Catherine has discussed this with the DoT in English and relates that other Schools are struggling with late dissertation marking as well which affects applications for work despite the earlier finishing date of the semester. Catherine emphasises that these specific issues are happening due to the changes and that these changes are not opinions but facts.
 - Robbie (SP Computer Science) expresses that staff have raised that, although marking time is the same during Winter Break, they also have less time for preparing the second semester. This affects especially new staff who have never taught before. Furthermore, the shortened Spring Break affects students of Computer Science significantly because modules in Semester 2 are particularly work-heavy and are still structured in a way that requires at least one week of work, when spring break, they had at least one week holiday, one week working. Robbie points out that students have less of a chance to make practical experiences than their predecessors which is a required part of job applications in the field.
 - Noah adds that this affects the time available for staff to adjust teaching based on MEQ and other module feedback for semester 2 and makes feedback mechanisms less effective.
 - Anna (SP Philosophy) raises that staff in the School of Philosophy have emphasised similar issues, especially those on 1-year contracts and who now are doubly harmed, as they need extra time to prepare. Anna appreciates consideration for EDI issues and points out that this hasn't solved EDI issues entirely, and has instead introduced others.
 - Claire (SP Music) asks what ideas for a different structure are in the room? Clare (Proctor) replies that the structure of the 1st semester will not be changed, as this has been changed in the past and was quickly changed back. Clare points out that any changes will not come into effect until 2024-25 at the earliest. Clare also emphasises that days of the week fall differently each year. Frank (AVP Learning and Teaching) adds that it may come down to a longer Winter Break or a longer summer.
 - Robbie (SP Computer Science) adds that his first year started on the 28th January which still allows to finish the semester in time for an internship.
 - Noah (Director of Education) asks whether going back to the old calendar is an option at all and whether the benefits that were promised by the change are being seen? Noah recalls the first UAF where Frank asked for specific options to be considered by stakeholders. Noah asks whether the results of the survey were helpful?
 - Clare (Proctor) answers that the changes are being seen and that the results were helpful and will be considered.
 - Sandro (Postgraduate Academic Convenor) appreciates the conversation, as some issues in the PGT community like workload appear to be affected by the academic calendar which is barely addressed because current PGT students came to the

university after the changes were put into place and won't have the perspective of several years to draw on.

Extensions

- Noah asks if members of university staff could outline the current state of extension requests.

Frank (AVP Learning and Teaching) relates on behalf of Sharon Leahy (Associate Dean Students, Science) who has been working on a new extension policy and who was unable to join the meeting. Frank prefaces this summary by saying that there is nothing improper or wrong or weak about extensions but that they mark that something has gone wrong which needs to be fixed as fairly and transparently as possible. Frank emphasises that this is where the extension work needs to go: students should feel like they are being supported. Currently between 1,200 to 1,800 extension requests are reported in some Schools. These are globalised figures, no particular figures are available so far. Frank points out that the question is, why is there this significant need? Frank highlights that extensions do not make the work disappear but instead make it appear later. The first step is to consider how do to get students to feel that the workload targets are appropriate? Frank relates that there was a big rise in extension requests during lockdown, some dropped after, some have continued to rise. Frank raises two questions:

1. So why is the challenge of meeting deadlines still such a big challenge? Sharon and others are working on a uniform system that alerts all various significant people; this is going to be set up as an IT project but the decision remains with the School. Currently, Schools are being consulted on how to run this successfully. Frank also points out that ongoing conditions are an entirely different thing and do not weigh into this question.
2. How can extension requests be reduced?

- Questions:
 - o Patricia (SP Earth & Environmental Sciences) expresses appreciation for the approach. Patricia points out that Frank mentioned the relationship between lockdown and extensions. Patricia asks: Has it been discussed how the academic calendar and extension requests may be related?
 - Gerald (Associate Dean Education, Science) answers: rising extension requests were already an issue before the changes and were exacerbated by the lockdown. The emphasis is on what it is that creates this anxiety in the first place.
 - Frank (AVP Dean of Learning and Teaching) answers that there are more extension requests in the second semester. This may be due to some deadlines from first semester being pushed into the second semester.
 - o Ros (Director of Student Experience) asks: are students asking for extensions because they have not had the time or is it because they are wanting to submit the best possible work?
 - Claire (SP Music) answers: it is not by choice and not for perfectionist reasons. Students do not want to ask for extensions but physically cannot write them.
 - Kiki (SP International Relations) adds that students are aware of deadlines pushing into each other – they do not want to ask for extensions.
 - o Claire (SP Music) responds to Frank (AVP Dean of Learning and Teaching) by pointing at the mental health crisis post-covid. Claire points out that student services give priority to people in extreme cases, those who are less urgent take weeks to receive support. In this time, there is not much support

Kommentiert [MK1]: -Are the questions marks to confirm who exactly was speaking or what the role of the person is?

available, an extension is the easiest support that is accessible. What could help is providing more overall help to students from a wellbeing perspective. Claire also points out that it is not the fault of staff in student services.

- Noah (Director of Education) adds: we have worked with student services about perceived long waiting times. There is a long chain of people in the processes from identifying an issue, to getting referred, to getting assessed for appointment, to getting an appointment, to getting seen, to perhaps getting support. Student services are working on what is the appropriate time for when to refer people to whom and to do both routes at the same time. This may address some issues.
- Madeleine (LC German) points out that about 50% of students engage with student services (for any issues). Currently, it is six weeks waiting times.
- Clare (Proctor) points out that mental health issues are higher in this institution than in other institutions but also the student-staff ratio is better than at other institutions. Clare points out that mental health is a societal problem. The question is what the university can do to provide support since this is a systemic problem. Clare relates that the Scottish government is taking away funding at the moment for counselling.
- Gerald (Associate Dean Education, Science) adds: We completely understand that having support in student services is beneficial to the student population. We want students to enjoy their studies. How can we make students feel supported?
- Noah reads out comments online:
 - Emma (Director of Wellbeing and Equality): (responding to Frank's initial remarks on this) "I think extension requests can also mark a moment where something has gone wrong on the teaching staff and academic system side, not just on the student's end -- e.g. too many deadlines all piled into one week" and "Work targets may also be set arbitrarily in a way that does not best suit students' lives in St Andrews or are not the most effective way to test students' learning, so it isn't just about ensuring all students can meet these targets, but also reviewing the targets themselves and ensuring they are designed to work for our students." and "It sometimes isn't just about mental health in terms of a mental health crisis or condition that's affecting your work, but rather more general mental and physical wellbeing and self-care; such as requesting simply a 1-day extension because you have been working on the assignment nonstop or have had an emotionally taxing week supporting a friend or something, and need to prioritise getting a good night's sleep or taking a break to do something to relax, instead of pulling an all-nighter to complete the work by the deadline"
 - Cam (incoming Director of Education): "While it is important to address the reasons why students are applying for extensions, it is equally important to ensure students have a basic universal safety net. Students are asking for consideration of the floor, not a ceiling on extensions- this is equally important as trying to address the issues, because there will inevitably be issues that affect students that haven't yet been addressed - despite best intentions "
- Frank (AVP Learning and Teaching) points out that **staff should design deadlines in a way that is realistic**. This is something that is achieved together. Frank relates that workload in general has been reduced because it was clear that students were being overassessed in past years.
- Robbie (SP Computer Science) relates that the LTC Away Day showed that a University-wide policy may not account for specific requests but a policy

would take into account a minimum of reasons for granting an extension. Noah adds that this policy would provide benchmarks but also take nuances into account.

- Noah points out that one thing that was noticed was that for the same reasoning different extensions were granted. Another question that was looked at was what the reason for not giving an extension would be. In response, practical reasons were raised (i.e. module reporting deadlines). This also takes into account that students do not want to ask for an extension in the first place.
- Noah suggests that extensions could be granted as a basis, only taking that support away for practical reasons, but supporting the student to have a realistic working plan to complete all their work in the allotted time, and to address external issues in the best way to support academic engagement.
 - Gerald (Associate Dean Education, Science) understands the idea but points out that the reality is much more complex. As an academic, there is a reporting time. Gerald emphasises that all stories that lead to an extension request are unique. Gerald personally cannot imagine how those floors could possibly be set. Floors would inhibit from looking into individual circumstances.
 - Robbie (SP Computer Science) responds that floors are meant to be clarifying for what to expect and request.
 - Emma (SP Psychology & Neuroscience) adds: Some students raised that students would only be granted an extension request in the moment of suffering, not after the illness is over. Could this be included?
 - Frank (AVP Learning and Teaching) asks: is there a broad sense that extensions are largely denied?
 - Carol (SP Physics & Astronomy) responds that it depends on the department.
 - Frank (AVP Learning and Teaching) responds that many extension requests are being granted. Where are hotspots of student perceptions that students are cruelly penalised by not being granted extension requests?
 - Kiki (SP International Relations) responds that some extension requests were not responded to and when the deadline is past students were told that it was too late.
 - Frank (AVP Learning and Teaching) responds that this is a staff failure issue. Frank encourages officers to report these kinds of instances to Frank.
 - Madeleine (LC German) points out that it is a problem with the system and that these are not individual cases. There are far more students now complaining about the difficulties of getting an extension than students not doing work. These difficulties only shows that students do not want to ask for extensions.
 - Frank responds: 'I procrastinate more when I can.'
 - Carol (SP Physics & Astronomy) responds: 'It is important to have a minimum safety net. There should be a minimum floor for where students are treated with respect.'
 - Frank (AVP Learning and Teaching) responds: 'I do not think it is fair to say that students are not being treated with respect.'
 - Carol apologises and corrects: 'students just should be treated with respect, especially when they are down.'
 - Gerald Prescott (Associate Dean Education, Science) points out that there is an academic appeals process.

- Carol expresses that many students are unaware that there is an academic appeals process for extensions.
- Noah mentions that the academic appeals process has been mentioned at UAF before, and issues with the process and awareness of it have been discussed in other groups as well. Noah disagrees that the appeals option adequately addresses issues faced by students.
- Catherine (SP English) raises that the idea of a floor and this being a systemic problem is ultimately about intense shame that is being introduced into these discussions through student services. The idea of the floor is not about isolating those cases. Instead, the idea of proactiveness should be emphasised. Catherine emphasises transparency and the set of expectations.
- Kiki (SP International Relations): the University talks about students being open, the consequences are more demands on student services. The University is not seeing extension requests as part of that discussion. The School of Economics & Finance has a blanket policy of one 24-hour extension request granted with no questions asked per semester. This appreciates that people need flexibility which is in line with what Robbie proposed.
- Zoë (SP Maths & Statistics) raises that Frank mentioned data on why extensions are asked for. Zoë points out that School Presidents/Language Convenors are not in the position to give that data because these reasons that are shared with staff confidentially. Zoë is happy to work with staff together on that.
 - Gerald (Associate Dean Education, Science) asks who should be the demographic to ask for the root cause. Even if there was a floor policy, this does not address the root cause.
- Noah (Director of Education) calls a 5-minute break and expresses that attendees are welcome to leave the meeting.

The discussion resumes after the break.

- Noah (Director of Education) resumes the discussion and asks: 'Are expectations we place on students reasonable? May that feed into discussions about extension policies?'
 - Ros (Director of Student Experience) points out that education is changing increasingly towards favouring continuous assessment. Ros suggests investigating further how and when assessments take place and that extensions themselves may be a symptom of something else.
 - Noah (Director of Education) asks: 'is there a pattern in certain assessments causing students to submit extension requests that could be looked at?'
 - Gerald (Associate Dean Education, Science) expresses hesitancy as to how helpful this would be. Gerald relates that in the past, assessment took place in the form of finals at the end of a 2-year period which led to a period of acute stress for a span of about 3 months. That stress then was terrible but not detrimental as continuous stress (of continuous assessment) can be. Gerald asks if students would prefer the structure of finals, which would also solve academic calendar issues.
 - Kirsty (SP Chemistry) thinks that grouping assessments to one period is more School-like (i.e. A-levels). Kirsty points out that going to University poses the step away from school-like structures towards independent learning. Kirsty relates that in the School of Chemistry, it is safe to say that a large reason for extensions is that the student-staff ratio is not as small as it used to be and that students did not gain the skills that past cohorts did during their final years in high school due to covid.

- Gerald points out that, if it was his personal choice, he would like to get rid of exams altogether. Gerald poses the question what the compromise is.
- Kiki (SP International Relations) expresses that staff are not equipped to respond to this large number of extensions. Kiki raises that none of the attendees of this meeting can judge whether a student is going through a crisis.
 - Gerald (Associate Dean Education, Science) agrees and points out that the process should be transparent, clear, and not create additional stress. Gerald also emphasises building clarity at the beginning of the year to demystify the process in advance. Gerald relates that an intern is currently looking at how accessible and comprehensible policies are. Another goal is to reduce anxiety of the process (i.e. academic alerts).
 - Catherine (SP English) agrees and suggests implementing a student services lecture in each school at the beginning of year for information.
 - Zoe (SP Maths & Statistics) proposes a cross-school survey and is happy to collaborate on this.
- Frank (AVP Learning & Teaching) expresses that excessive assessment should be raised with module coordinators to facilitate re-designing the modules. The question is how can students be empowered to be better at studying through time management and stress management skills. Frank acknowledges that there are deficiencies in schools in past years due to covid that should have taught these skills. Ultimately, students should be strengthened. Those with mental health issues and disabilities also should be empowered and sensitively taken care of. Frank emphasises reasonable study expectations.
 - Robbie (SP Computer Science) relates that the School of Computer Science is particularly bad for extension requests. Students have repeatedly asked Robbie about the process of an extension request. Robbie relates a story when a huge number of requests due to an external issue resulted in a general accommodation throughout the module which Robbie helped facilitate by explaining the process of requesting an extension. Students ended up going back to this email for other instances that required an extension request. Robbie points out that students are working more extracurricular jobs due to the cost-of-living crisis. Robbie emphasises that for CS in particular, it is expected that students are also working during their studies because employers do not trust the education provided by universities. Robbie adds that St Andrews actually teaches students the things they will need but employers assume that universities all operate that way. [Robbie reads a job description out loud.] Robbie adds that students are expected in the industry to have done personal projects so they often lie that coursework was in fact a personal project. Robbie further adds that coursework has already been adjusted but the expectations are still very high.
 - Frank (AVP Dean of Learning & Teaching) relates that employers raise with the university that students cannot keep deadlines.
 - Robbie (SP Computer Sciences) responds that among the student population the perception is that internships are much more relaxed than university.
 - Noah (Director of Education) adds that every full-time job has been easier to work than studying. This is also due to formalisations and standards. Furthermore, there is more emotional pressure as a student, as the only person who is affected by the student not performing is the student themselves. Also adds that it's natural to take time away when dealing with sickness, personal loss, or other issues, and that workplaces have to accommodate this. Individual pressure is smaller.

Kommentiert [MK2]: -already ..? there might be a word missing after "already"?

Hitanshi (incoming Faculty President Arts & Divinity) disagrees that extensions are symptoms of systemic failure but in fact are a sign of systemic success. How do institutions make those processes better?

- Anne (SP Art History): agrees with Frank's approach but emphasises that a broad extension policy be applied. In the Learning and Teaching Committee meeting, staff showed that they did not know what to do either: this policy will also be helpful for staff.
- Frank (AVP Dean Learning & Teaching) asks what the effect of a 24-hour blanket policy would have.
- Kiki (SP International Relations) responds that in the School of Econ & Finance students expressed that they were both happier and also turn their work in because they feel more supported. Kiki clarifies that this 24-hr policy does not apply to all deadlines but is an extension that can be used once a semester. Students are not asking for all of their work to be delayed. Kiki points out that this will not remove all problems but that it is worth looking into and considering.
- Frank (AVP Dean Learning & Teaching) offers to look into the effect of the 24-hr gift policy on extension requests but expresses scepticism. Frank relates that back in Germany, coursework is submitted at the end of semester. One tutor was lazy and did not set a deadline which led to decreased submissions. Frank points out that there is a seductiveness in giving yourself extra time. A one day delay does not show that there is a serious mental health issue.
- Kiki (SP International Relations) emphasises being open to having that discussion once data on this is available and the conversation is not entirely speculative. Kiki emphasises being open to change in either direction.
- Claire (SP Music) points out that the only data currently available is the number of extension requests but no data on which schools are affected, for what period of time requests are made, how many different people are requesting extensions and why. The unified portal should give insight into this. Many schools also don't track extension requests, only approved extensions.
 - Ros (Director of Student Experience) points out that sometimes reasons presented differ from the true reasons behind a request but there is no way around that.
- Gerald (Associate Dean Education, Science) points out that AMG (Academic Monitoring Group) looks at huge amounts of data where mental health keeps coming up. What is the underlying cause leading to that? And consequently, would a short-time extension be relieving that?
 - Laurence (SP Divinity) responds that this is not about people mismanaging their time. Some lecturers also refuse to grant extensions.
 - Gerald points out that staff are not saying that every student cannot manage their time. It is about cohesion: the University is happy to support students in finding approaches that allow to manage time such as appropriate deadlines and workload. Gerald agrees with Laurence but part of it is an approach to learning. Deadlines for research grants for example are not flexible.
 - Frank (AVP Dean Learning & Teaching) offers to follow up on lecturers refusing to grant extensions.
 - Laurence raises that it is hard in a small school like Divinity to point to lecturers. Lecturers will know who reported them. It is hard and dehumanising to ask for extensions, being refused and then reporting that to Frank. This is well known in the school of divinity.
 - Noah (Director of Education) clarifies that a Rep is never expected to be a case workers or to escalate an issue for an individual student themselves.

Open floor and Thanks

- Noah (Director of Education) sincerely thanks everyone for staying longer and invites attendees to share what they gathered from this forum.
- Frank (AVP Dean Learning & Teaching) offers that students reach out to him.
- Gerald (Associate Dean Education, Science) asks for trust and to continue this productive dialogue.
- Noah (Director of Education) points out that a lot of reports from the report & support tool do not go anywhere. This will be carried forward.
- Noah concludes: 'Thank you for your partnership throughout the year. Reps are incredibly valuable and your voices matter.' Noah invites all officers to continue providing feedback until the end of their term in July 2023.