Minutes

Student Opportunities Executive

Wednesday 25th September 2026
18:00 hours
Old Union Diner and Microsoft Teams

Attendees

Thomas Jordan (Chair of Student Opportunities), Robert Moran (President of Student Opportunities), Archie Ronald (Student Opportunities Co-ordinator), Cerys Deas (VP Student Opportunities – Societies & Activities), Gia Karunakaran (VP Student Opportunities - Employability), Ufuoma Ehwerhemuepha (Student Opportunities Intern), 9 students completed registration, 2 students attended but did not register

Apologies

N/A

Minutes

1 Standard updates

1.1 Updates

1.1.1 Societies and Activities List

- Cerys
- Freshers fayre, looking for feedback later in the forum
- Recruited two members and opening more applications

1.1.2 Employability Team

- Gia (joined online)
- Have officially opened positions and are advertising them, soon to be on the Union website
- Sally to attend meeting with Gia
- There will be talks at the start of upcoming lectures to introduce the new employability Team
- Trying to avoid overlap an information talk event with the career's fayre
- Setting up meetings with the employability team and

1.1.3 President of Student Opportunities

- Romo
- Freshers' fayre (to go into more detail later) looking for feedback on it
- New Opportunities department and are requiring additional members

- We are looking into providing more volunteer recognition by introducing a volunteer cafe (Wednesday 30th Sept 10am –12), an informal discussion group about what volunteer recognition means
- Working on space in the Union- union lacks space, with more people coming in the problem is getting worse. Will soon be meeting with senior university people in the next week to see if there is potential to work with the university to find larger spaces (rehearsals, big team meetings)
- Currently looking at union policies about how rooms are booked, the common sentiment from the forum that recourse booker a nightmare
- Society liaisons- many of you here today as part of this forum. The first year we are doing this for societies to have better connection to the union.
- Postgraduate community Plans- since covid post graduate activities have taken a nosedive. So, we have come up with a solution; all the PG elections were shuffled around, elections happening start of October and will create a committee of all the PG reps. One member of this committee will sit on all exec meetings to advocate for PG issues, (note: few interns working on research about this at the minute) create PG societies, PG working groups and PG officers on society committees. Looking at many things and will be working through them once we have our cohort
- Happy to answer any questions

1.1.4 Chair of Student Opportunities

- Thomas
- Came into post in May and has since been working closely with Pres of Student Opportunities
- Strategy- has been working with the department to see if there is a better way to work with all of the different teams' strands
- Exec- will be advertising for two general members (more info to be discussed nearer the end of the meeting)
- Society liaisons- why we are here today to talk about (voting happening later)
- So far, it has been a lot of work to get things off the ground, this forum rolled around much faster than expected so pacing a bit slower on projects

1.1.5 Student Opportunities Co-ordinator

- Archie
- New system, trying to get the governance of that sorted
- Freshers- it was big and new one for the team considering the two-day structure and new events and manger joining, inviting people for feedback at later session of the meeting

- Society trainings over the weeks- various tech issues and clashes, still a lot of room for improvement not everyone could make it, issues with teams' channels. Looking at different options for next year
- Next big thing is looking at risk assessments, trying to make it an easier system for societies and need a more expansive view, currently only two people in the union that can approve risk assessments so also trying to sort this out, will have a plan to share at the next forum
- New cohort of interns working across the union team
- (note: societies please pick up your mail)

1.2 Governance

1.2.1 Society Liaison Election

- Thomas- has been made aware of a couple of new additions to this list, will call out names, everyone to explain the role they are running for, can give a short speech about why you should run
- Liaisons are a direct link from a cluster of societies to the union, around 10-15 societies in that clusters theme. They will act as a guide to societies such as reaffiliation, making committee lives easier

- Business Innovation and Tec Liaison, Sarah Jain, speech given, attendees begin vote, consensus met, voted in
- Charities Relations Liaison, August Loevendal, speech given, attendees begin vote, consensus met, voted in
- Hobbies Culture and Lifestyle, Alex Wiseman, speech given, attendees begin to vote, consensus met, voted in
- Medical, Walada Ramram, not present, still a voting option, consensus met, not voted in
- Medical, Nadia Sarraf, speech given, attendees begin to vote, consensus met, voted in
- Outdoors, Physical Activity and Animals, Adam Mercer, not present but paragraph sent and read by Thomas in his absence, consensus met not voted in
- Outdoors, Physical Activity and Animals, Awen Dafydd, consensus met, voted in
- Clusters with no applications as of 6pm 25th September, attendees invited to run
- Arts and Humanities
- Culture and Faith (recruiting 2 liaisons)
- Political and Campaigning
- Science and Maths, Hazel Lloyd-wakeman, speech given, attendees begin to vote, consensus met, voted in
- Next forum will also be an opportunity to run again

1.2.2 Recruitment of upcoming roles

- Student opportunities executive are recruiting two general members over the next week; improving budgets, overseeing departmental goals, KPI's

2 Freshers Debrief

2.1 Romo opened the floor for feedback

- Open to thoughts about how we changed the fresher's fayre
- Two-day format worked a lot well than thought, but need to work on the marque as many students did not know where it was
- Some congestion in some specific areas, near the middle 601 where people were queuing
- Commercial people were much more pushy than last year, maybe ask them to be less pushy
- Would be comforting for societies to learn further in advance about what days they're on and where their table is
  → Archie, convos about this are happening behind the sense, reaffiliation process will include if you want a fresher's fayre
- A lot less stressful than last year to work for, accessibility issues we faced last year were reduced (although there is still some space to improve)
- Two-day structure good, after first day could reconvene and improve for the second
- Publicity should be improved, small map at the front of the union not enough for societies

3 Performing Arts Network

3.1 Network to help all the productions and their relationships with the Byre to help facilitate different strands

- Romo asking attendees to approve a mandate about what to do with this group, consensus is yes, Romo to share outcomes by next month
- Lucy Turner as Union Performing Arts Officer, leads the Network and acts as the Liaison

4 Employability Working Groups

- Romo
- Excited about these working groups, the societies team has societies but the employability team in new and they will have these working groups
- These working groups to tackle specific issues
- The university strategy is soon to be out of date with its 5 pillars (note: Romo remembered all 5 pillars) but the circumstances of these pillars are different

- Digital- first meant more hybrid things but now with AI, needs to change how to work with this?
- The University have specifically asked to get students to ask them on what it means to be entrepreneurial- short life working group just for a few weeks, send info back to the university
- One of the first big things the employability team is doing

5 AOCB

- University of St Andrews Charity Campaign raise concern over new role of "Society Liaison for Charity Relations" clashing with the existing Union Charities Officer.
- RoMo and Archie emphasise that the Society Liaison for Charity Relations role exists to support the society committees in their work, and will not carry out charitable projects themselves.
- How should we promote ourselves? Currently a place for societies to come and talk to/help with
  → Archie and Romo- charity liaisons just focused on the connection to the union, the charities officers run the campaigns and elected projects. None of the role's remits have changed
  → Open to having a longer discussion on this for clarity
- How will training work for Liaisons?
  → Archie- Info will be shared soon, detailed training on how our societies operate and how to introduce yourselves