

**Education Committee**

**Thursday 21st November, 5:30pm**

**Students’ Association Committee Room**

**Agenda**

1. Welcome and introduction
2. Apologies

* Kyle, Elisa, Madeline, Sarah, Rhiannon, Eva, Charlotte (no apologies sent), Olle (left early), Lot (left early)

1. Matters Arising
   1. Strikes update

* No major complaints from students from the different Schools
* Joe: Students going to the strike help-desk
* Nathan: Some staff members have been sick, but the School could not ask them if they were not there because of the strike, which has caused confusion
  1. Academic Alerts
* Amy (DoEd): Any ideas regarding academic alerts? Do they freak students out? Is this a form of checking in or seen as a warning?
* Amy (DoEd): All introductory lectures should have a standing point on academic alerts, and all tutors have been asked to do so
* Seamus: They seem to be there to deter you from skipping things. The Computer Science School is quite thorough with them. If they are to be used as a ‘check in’ alert, you would need to change systems (e.g. turn up to X amount of classes)
* Valeria: One of her class reps handed in a piece of coursework late and it was only worth 5%. An academic alert for such a tiny piece of coursework seems quite excessive (Amy (DoEd) agrees)
* Joe: “You may receive 0 X for the module…” is written at the bottom of academic alerts (for missing a class twice); this seems quite aggressive
* Amy (DoEd): You can get an academic alert for attendance, missing an assessment, and a lack of engagement
* Nathan: Attendance is marked separately in Medicine, it seems (e.g. yellow cards)
* Morganne: Could they not separate out levels of seriousness for academic alerts?
* Amy (DoEd): There are levels; e.g. 8, 9, 10 (10 being 0 X)
* Amy (DoEd): Agrees that they sound aggressive. Should perhaps be more about ‘please contact this person’ – less ‘alert’ focus
* Morganne: Different messages for them, perhaps? (E.g. submitting something 1 hour late versus a day late)
* Lot: If they are worried about mental health, being so aggressive and formulating it in strong language will just exacerbate the issue (especially if they are sent out on the Monday after an assessment is sent in late after Friday 1pm, for example)
* Amy (DoEd): Will relay the above feedback to the relevant working groups of academic alerts
  1. MEQs
* Amy (DoEd): Please publicise MEQs – the University takes them very seriously. 50%+ turn out per module would be ideal. Email has been sent out (includes a link to the dashboard where you can see your School’s current rate)
* Lot: Something that has been raised in his Class Rep meetings is what is the difference between an SSCC and an MEQ? A bit of ambiguity seems to be there…
* Amy (DoEd): Purpose of the SSCC is to get things as much as possible sorted during the semester (feedback and implementations), whereas MEQs are based on making the module better for the next time around. Two key channels of feedback throughout the semester
* Joe: Why can School Presidents not see the MEQ tartan rugs anymore?
* Amy: It seems to be a new policy
* Amy (DoEd): You should have access to it as a School President
  1. Enterprising Mind of the Year
* Amy (DoEd): Sent an email with a blurb; please publicise the above to all students
  1. Draft role descriptions (Sophia)
* Sophia: Read out the draft documents for School President and Faculty President role descriptions
* Morganne: Putting the number of hours on the document may deter people from running
* Amy (DoEd) and Sophia: Agree we should be trying to reduce the number of hours School Presidents must work
* Lauren: School President shadowing would be a good idea
* Nathan: Maybe make the training sessions at the end of semester two earlier, i.e. before revision
* Natalia: Having a mentor who is the previous School President is super helpful; facilitate the transition much better
* Amy (DoEd), Sophia, Joe: Need to make the time commitment transparent
* Amy (DoEd): Deans also concerned regarding the School Presidents’ workload; Amy, Sophia, and Dennis to work on this next semester. Work with the Careers Centre will also hopefully help. Also, a ‘key things to do as a School President’ schedule may help. Schools are so independent and different in terms of how things operate; shadowing can thus be very efficient. This role is very overwhelming
* Joe and Amy (DoEd): Workshops for saying no and also regarding how much autonomy one has
* Nathan: Only one of his first-year reps responded to him regarding Academic Calendar
* Amy (DoEd): Perhaps redevelop class rep training – more than just SSCC feedback collection
* Amy: Not entirely clear what the role of a class rep is. Physics class rep system is changing – meeting fortnightly is helping the engagement improve
* Morganne: Class reps seem to have very little power; e.g. catering, booking spaces (which Morganne can’t even do), and so forth. They do not do that much, as there is not that much they can do
* Lot: You can book some rooms
* Natalia: Should be made more explicit what the School Presidents’ remit is, how to interact with School Presidents
  1. Wellbeing as a standing item on SSCC agendas
* Amy (DoEd): This was suggested last year – could put wellbeing as a standing item on all SSCC agendas. May also be a good way to close the feedback loop
  1. Module information talks
* Amy (DoEd): This is something which some Schools do (e.g. Management, English, Philosophy) – e.g. ‘what to expect in Honours’ the Spring before Honours
* Callum: Advertised as an Honours module fayre, which is not what it was; it was a talk. Two honours advisers in a room and you could go chat with them
* Sophia: In Philosophy, they have two talks. One prior to Honours on all modules, where staff come in to talk about their modules, and then at the start of Honours (for third years) on what to expect, etc.
* Morganne: Biology has an Honours module fayre, which is really helpful
* Lauren: Management does an entire presentation where each module coordinator showcases their module. Currently remodelling it; HR and finance split (according to interests)
* Angela: Only a meeting with the Honours adviser
* Some School Presidents organise this (English, Social Anthropology, Economics), whilst some Schools/Departments organise this
* Valeria: School is quite supportive of such events
* Lara: Can we get rid of the module information talks? They seem pretty useless; the lecturer talks about what you do in a module. People don’t go anymore – seemingly wastes valuable teaching time
* Sophia: They host these as students often don’t read the Module Handbook
* Amy (DoEd): If students are really aware of what’s happening, it reduces email traffic which tutors and lecturers get throughout the semester. However, could condense these talks, or so. Talk to your Head of Dept.
  1. School second-hand textbook libraries
* Amy (DoEd): Idea in her manifesto that in Schools, they have centralised libraries of reusable textbooks
* Nathan: Library or store? Giving it to someone forever or giving it back?
* Amy (DoEd): Would need to be decided and/or monitored quite carefully. She imagined it as a library
* Joe: They change the textbook every three years in IR. This would work for three years in IR and then stop and being ‘recharged’
* Nathan: Medicine has one textbook which is given a new edition every year
* Joe: Generally seems like a good idea
* Valeria: Who would run it?
* Amy (DoEd): Could be a task for the new sustainability rep. Thanked Joe for the feedback
  1. Changes to Faculty Presidents’ remit
* Amy (DoEd): We are making a couple of key changes regarding the structure of things. Firstly, the Faculty Presidents’ remit is really focused on self-initiative projects (which Sophia and Dennis have done this semester), but there are no direct responsibilities to support the DoEd and School Presidents. Moreover, the DoEd’s role needs to be narrowed slightly. Making the relevant changes required (needs to be more sustainable for the DoEd).
* Education Committee is going to be run by Faculty Presidents next semester; remember to send your reports to the Faculty President(s). Faculty Presidents are the first point of contact for School Presidents (this is already part of the role but needs to be made more transparent/explicit)
* Dennis: First half of semester two’s Education Committees run by Sophia (send reports to Sophia for first four Educoms, second half run by Dennis (send reports to Dennis for final Educoms)
* Sophia: Whoever is not running Education Committee (including making the Agendas) will take the Minutes and edit them. Please send the report for the week to the respective Faculty President
* All questions and emails which would usually be directed to the DoEd should henceforth be directed to your respective Faculty President. If the query would be better answered by the DoEd, the Faculty President will forward the query to them.

1. AOCB
   1. Christmas lunch – Monday 2nd December at midday, Main Bar

* Amy (DoEd): Pay on the day in cash/by card
  1. SP clothing - the final deadline for payment at the Cash Office is tomorrow
* Amy (DoEd): Final deadline is tomorrow
  1. Date of next meeting: Thursday 6th February

School Presidents’ Forum: Monday 27th January (5pm)

* 1. Semester One Reports
* Amy (DoEd): Due January 31st – send to Amy (all information including examples are in the email Amy sent today)
  1. Teaching Awards
* Amy (DoEd): I will be asking you to publicise these next semester
  1. NSS
* Amy (DoEd): Will give everyone promotional posters and so forth to publicise the NSS next semester

**Reports from School Presidents**

**Art History**

* sent weekly email
* Attended School Council
* Continued gathering student interest for Fife Collections partnership
* Booked out rooms in Art History building for student use during revision week
* Attended Museums Student Advisory Panel
* Began corresponding with Morag Fraser (Careers Centre) to discuss possible speakers for alumni careers event in semester 2

**Biology – no report submitted.**

**Chemistry**

Done this week   
Followed up on therapy dogs   
Attend chemistry Postgraduate Affairs committee meeting   
Attended chemistry teaching committee   
Applied to EDF for wellbeing event   
Applied to HoS for Wellbeing event   
Advertising and organisation of Wellbeing event   
Email about strikes   
Catch up with PG Reps about organising a PG Chemsitry social next semester

**Classics – no report submitted.**

**Computer Science**

Held class rep forum, discussed academic calendar

Had a meeting to discuss growing resource constraints within the school

Emailed weekly update, that included strike information

Held first CS ball meeting

Released application for industry engagement program

**Divinity**

Continued from the 18th of November 15:00

18th November

* 17:00-18:30 attended the School President Forum.

19th November

* 11:00-11:36 composed and submitted the Employability Report for the School of Divinity to the Doed.
* 11:00 emailed a class rep to check their progress on their SSCC report.
* 20:19 emailed the final class rep who had not submitted a report, checking their progress.

20th November

* 10:28 emailed a class rep to change the format of their report so I could access the file.
* 10:45-11:25 created the SSCC Agenda.
* 10:00-11:20 complied and edited the SSCC reports.
* 11:27 sent email to all the attendees for the SSCC which included the minutes from the last meeting, summary of the external examiners report, agenda and reports.
* 14:00-15:00 attended, chaired and minuted for the SSCC.
* 15:00-16:00 attended the Teaching Committee
* 16:30-5:15 finalised the minutes for the SSCC.
* 17:30-18:30 attended the Employability Forum.
* 18:25 sent email out to all the SSCC attendees that contained the meeting’s minutes.

21st November

* 11:52 responded to email from HoS concerning the strikes.
* 17:30-18:45 attended the Education Committee.

23rd November

* 15:17 sent an email to the class reps asking for their feedback on the proposed changes to the academic calendar.

25th November

* 14:00-15:30 attended the Museum Student Advisory Panel.

26th November

* 16:15-16:45 composed and send the weekly mass email out to the School of Divinity.
* 16:45-17:02 composed and sent this report to the DoEd.

**Economics and Finance – no report submitted.**

**English**

* Attending School President’s forum with all School Presidents, the Proctor, and the Deans of the Faculties of Arts and Divinity, and Science and Medicine
* Attending Education Committee
* Working with the President of the Faculty of Arts and Divinity to update the role outlines for School Presidents
* Hearing from a UCU Representative with other School Presidents on the background to the UCU Industrial Action to get a better idea of it.
* Meeting with the Director of Teaching to pass on concerns made by students regarding the impact of the upcoming strike action, and to confirm the proposed adjustments for assessments as suitable based on the concerns raised to me by students.
* Worked with the Film Studies President to make progress on the Alumni in the Creative Industries event for Semester 2
* Sent Weekly Email
* Met with Head of School to communicate anything that’s cropped-up with the strikes from students
* Attended School Council (cut-short because we were not quorate, due to industrial action)

**Earth and Environmental Sciences**

Actions Completed:

- This Is My Geological Life ran successfully

- Career’s events had good turnouts

- SSCC organized for Dec 2nd, 11 am

- Updated Mental Health Posters

Actions in process:

- Continuing the process of tackling the microscope problem

- Organising career’s day out for Sem 2

- Sorting out the Mentoring Scheme

- Liaising with DoT about improving teaching flow from 2nd to 3rd year

Other notes:

- N/A

**Film Studies**

· 18/11 – Sent out weekly email and responded to student queries about strikes

· 18/11 – Attended School President’s Forum

· 19/11 – Shared academic calendar proposal with Class Reps and so far have received positive feedback, but also a concern about the possibility of crammed deadlines before breaks and holidays

· 19/11 – Confirmed one staff and two postgraduate speakers for Film Studies Masters information event and started advertising event to students

· 22/11 – Film Studies Masters information event: after a brief introduction about the two MLitt courses, students were able to ask questions about application process and course structure. The event allowed undergraduate students to engage more with postgraduates and learn about the environment of the Department’s research groups.

· 60 Hour Film Blitz (26/11): launch event location booked (delegated to Festival Director), event created and shared online and on this week’s email, printed quiz questions, approved logo design and had stickers ordered

**Geography and Sustainable Development – no report submitted.**

**History**

In Week 10 we held both of our SSCCs (sub-honours and honours/pg), both of which were successful! It was so much easier having split them up to listen and discuss without anything becoming hostile, and the meeting was easier to chair in terms of time.

Joel (Classics) and I have secured a venue and a date for Ides Ball!! Many thanks to Amy for helping us with our financial queries (as we have no existing funds with which to finance the ball).

**International Relations – no report submitted.**

**Graduate School**

General Concerns & Questions:

- Concerns have been raised and remain unresolved regarding the Sports Centre as venue for the graduation instead of Younger Hall. Proposals for solutions include using other venues like Upper/Lower College or Parliament Hall. à a Graduate School reception is likely to take place after the official graduation

- Attended the Student – Museum Advisory Panel on Nov 25th

- Due to the strikes: information with regards to the ASC helpdesk have been circulated, individual deadline extensions are to be granted to students from the IDP programme

Class Reps:

- Christmas Dinner with the Grad School staff and students is to be organised (date set for the 5th of December at the Byre Theatre)

- Graduate School sweaters are organised in cooperation with the University shop (Graduate School plans to subsidise sweaters)

**Management – no report submitted.**

**Medicine**

**Monday:**

* *Met with CAPOD to discuss Study Skills Presentation (30min)*
* *Attended School President’s Forum (1.5h)*
* *Sent update to SSCC agenda w/ Wellbeing poster (5min)*

**Tuesday:**

**Wednesday:**

* *Held UG SSCC Meeting (1.5h)*
* *Emailed design team asking for 2 typo edits on wellbeing poster*

**Thursday:**

* *Attended EduCom (1h)*
* *Edited & Distributed SSCC Agenda (1h)*
* *Got approval from clive for poster printing costs, will also add to medhandbook. Awaiting edited wellbeing poster*

**Friday:**

* *Met with Alun, Cassandra & Isla about PALS ScotGEM (1h)*
* *Met with Alun*
* *Chased up class reps for academic calendar stuff*

**Weekend:**

* *Sent out weekly e-mail, prepped weekly report*
* *Finished prepping presentation*
* *Sent in info for new SP role description*

**Modern Languages – no report submitted.**

**Arabic and Persian Convenor – no report submitted.**

**Comparative Literature Convenor – no report submitted.**

**French Convenor – no report submitted.**

**German Convenor – no report submitted.**

**Italian Convenor – no report submitted.**

**Russian Convenor – no report submitted.**

**Spanish Convenor – no report submitted.**

**Music**

Week 11 Report

-Gathered feedback on changes to the academic calendar

-Finalised winter survey

-Meeting with Ross, Iona, Coordinator of Academic Music

-Informed students about strikes, MEQs and academic calendar

-Worked on the plan of action for careers events

**Philosophy – no report submitted.**

**Physics – no report submitted.**

**Psychology & Neuroscience – no report submitted.**

**Social Anthropology**

- SP Forum 17:00-18:30

19/11 - Week 10 email sent out. Email from 2nd year addressed (posted in 3rd and 4th year FB groups and replied to email).

20/11 - Email to second year with follow-up info sent; messages & emails replied to. (0.25) Employability forum 17:30-18:35

24/11 - Weekly email drafted.

26/11 - email sent.

**Reports from Faculty Presidents**

**Arts and Divinity Faculty President**

· In the process of updating the School President and Faculty President role description documents on the Union’s website. I have gathered some input from various School Presidents and am now creating draft documents

· Met with Amy to discuss the work we have done this semester and, looking ahead, our main semester two aims

· Met with Amy and Dennis to discuss our semester two plans, which include the Faculty Magazines, creating the agenda for and running EduComm (some restructuring is taking place), and postgraduate feedback

· Have relayed new postgraduate feedback from the School of IR and Philosophy Dept to the respective School Presidents

· Attended the second School Presidents’ Forum of the semester and the penultimate EduComm

· Helping Amy and Dennis organise the Xmas Dinner for School Presidents – exciting!

· In general, responding to numerous School Presidents’ questions, emails, and making sure they feel included by the EduComm community (and supported). Also, responding to other emails and requests as they come in

· Meeting with the Head of the Minorities and Philosophy before the end of this semester to plan our panel discussion for next semester

· Held my weekly office hours last week and this week (4-5pm in Rector’s), which included talking to some students who are interested in running for this position next calendar year

· Looking forward to the Race Equality Charter Group and Academic Councils meetings in December

· Will soon start writing my Semester One report

**Science and Medicine Faculty President**

1. What have I done since my last report?

26/11/19 Meeting with Amy (DoEd) and Sophia

Discussed the Faculty President role remit, and discussed shifting some responsibilities from the DoEd to the FPs, including EduCom and being the first point of contact for the SPs. Sophia is currently gathering all info about SP and FP roles, and I hope to assist in the creation of a newer, more updated list of tasks/roles that SPs and FPs have, with the aim of being more transparent about the responsibilities and the amount of time you’re expected to spend per week on duties. Also discussed potentially starting faculty journals via a subcommittee, but further discussion will take place next semester. Also, I’m going to organise a social for the SPs next semester :-)

21/11/19 Education Committee: attended and took minutes

Topics discussed were: strikes, the university’s gender pay gap, the strikes helpdesk, the consistency of credit weighting across modules in various schools, TEL feedback, and the academic integration of William and Mary students. Please email me if you want the (rough) minutes for this meeting, and please do add to them if I’ve missed something out.

18/11/19 School President’s Forum

SP Forum: The topics of discussion were strikes, vertically integrated projects, student representation on school teaching committees, and the suggested changes to the academic calendar format.

07/11/19 Education Committee: attended and took minutes

At this education committee, a representative of the Wardlaw Museum presented the new proposed layout of the museum and explained how it would be more student focused. We also discussed the idea of more outreach programmes organised by SPs, the strikes, and the school president workload. Also, we summarised what issues were to be brought up at the aforementioned SP Forum.

Other stuff:

Sophia and I are now part of the Race Equality Charter working group. Sophia met with Prof Woodfield (VP for E&D) to discuss the University’s E&D goals, which I unfortunately missed through illness. The first meeting will be in December, and I hope to report back afterwards.

Took part in the organisation of the panel event ‘Queer Academia’ on Nov 6th, which was a joint event between ChemSoc, PhySoc, AstroSoc, NeuroSoc, and Saints LGBT+. Happy to say it was successful and incredibly inspiring!

I personally (not in my role as SciMed FP) have taken a stance in favour of the University re-opening negotiations with the MoD concerning the construction of the Kenly Wind Farm. A petition by Amnesty St Andrews with more info is available here: <http://chng.it/rRdRfwRbfC>

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2. What progress have I made on my manifesto?

Addressing Mental health and wellbeing:

Through discussions with EduCom, it is clear that having only one wellbeing rep within each school is probably not enough to address serious problems that students bring up. Within physics, most (if not all) staff have wellbeing training, which makes it easier for students. From what I understood, the DoT's in some schools are chosen as wellbeing reps (some don't even have the training, which leads to further complications). DoT's are not considered the most approachable figures, whether that's due to their already immense workload or otherwise. Hence the updated goal is to replicate what we have in physics in other schools across the university. Having more lecturers with wellbeing training would greatly improve the support students could get, as they would be able to talk with whoever they are more comfortable around, and not just the DoT. Having an established wellbeing rep within every school is a good start towards this, so a way forward is clear. These issues have been passed on to the Deans and the Proctor at the first SP Forum.

Less manifesto related, but still relevant: Issues regarding the incompetent advice of the careers centre have also been communicated to the Proctor.

If there is anything you’ve read that you want to know more about, or you just want to ask me a question, my email is scimedfp@ and I’m open to an email at any time of day. If you want to come chat with me about anything, you can find me in the Physics building’s group study area (behind the café) between 11-12 on Fridays.