



Minutes from School Presidents' Forum

12th of February 2018, 5pm

Students' Association Committee Room

Present

Member

Zachary Davis
Professor Lorna Milne
Professor Paul Hibbert
Professor Douglas Philp
Fanny Empacher
Nicola Simonetti
Camilla Duke
Lily Ratchiff
Erin Phillips
Julian Frink
Gergely Flamich
Cameron Smith
Charlotte Gordon
Alison Quinn
Ellen White
Gaby Levey
Abi Whitefield
Alice Foulis
Sarah Gharib
Philip Caraci
Andrew Mitchell
Carissa Jacobs
Caitlin Macdonald
Antonia Zimmermann
Alisa Danilenko
Gianluca Giammei
Rikke Nedergaard

Position

Director of Education
Senior Vice-Principal (Proctor)
Dean of Arts & Divinity
Dean of Science
Postgraduate Academic Convener
Arts & Divinity FP
Rector's Assessor
Art History SP
Biology SP
Classics SP
Computer Science SP
Divinity SP
Earth Sciences & Geology SP
Economics & Finance SP
English SP
Film Studies & Music SP
Geography & SD SP
History SP
IR SP
Management SP
Mathematics & Statistics SP
Medicine SP
Modern Languages SP
Philosophy SP
Physics & Astronomy SP
Psychology & Neuroscience SP
Social Anthropology SP

1 Apologies

Member	Position
Srdja Popovic	Rector
John Weaver	Science & Medicine FP
Jacob Pepper	Chemistry SP

2 Minutes & Matters Arising

2.1 Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the previous meeting were taken as approved.

2.2 Follow-up on Action Points

The action points were addressed by the forum members:

- A NSS poster and slide were distributed to all School Presidents earlier in the semester.
- The Director of Education informed the forum that the general opinion is that students feel they have the right amount of group work for their respective discipline. Issues arose over the assessment of group work, where another student's action can impact on a student's grade. Individual marking was okay, and some Schools used a peer assessment for group work which was received well.
- The Dean of Arts & Divinity stated that each School got detailed information about NSS results.
- The next Learning & Teaching Committee meeting has a paper updating the role description of the School Careers Link in which the Director of Education will bring forward the School Presidents' comments.

3 Staff Strikes

The Director of Education and the Proctor gave a detailed overview and reasoning of the upcoming staff strikes. The current priority of the Students' Association is to minimise the impact that the strikes will have on students' education and to keep students informed, however, a discussion will take place at the next Joint Councils meeting in which a different position might be taken. A letter from the Association President and the Director of Education will be distributed to students later today, bringing them up to speed with the situation. The Proctor informed the members that the University had offered to write a joint letter to USS asking for a governance reformation, however, UCU have not taken this up. UCU is currently asking for the University to write to UUK asking to re-open negotiations on the pensions provision. The School President of Mathematics & Statistics raised the issue on assessment and examinations. The Proctor stated that given the nature of the strike action, examinations will not be affected. The University would also expect that all examinations and assessment are conducted in a fair manner, and that the impact of the strike action is taken into account. The School President of Biology asked how the strike action would affect students writing their dissertations. The Proctor replied saying that they would not be obliged to reply to student enquires on strike days, but would resume communication on a non-strike day allowing students to receive feedback.

4 Corporate Social Responsibility

The Proctor raised the topic of Corporate Social Responsibility, asking members what they would consider for inclusion in a University statement on the subject. The members discussed the following:

- Scholarships and bursaries for students who could not afford studying at St Andrews, and the criteria on which they are awarded.
- Bullying and harassment.
- Provisions for water fountains to reduce plastic waste.
- Town-gown interactions by student societies.
- Policies on food waste.
- Beach clean up initiatives.
- The use of your own cups for soup/drinks at the Library Cafe.

5 Papers for Information

A brief overview was given on the the papers provided for information. These papers where the minutes from the Education Committee and the NSS poster which was provided to School Presidents.

6 AOCB

The School President of Mathematics & Statistics raised the topic of gender imbalance at a postgraduate level following discussions at Education Committee. Members discussed ways in which this could be addressed, and it was thought that whilst there is a institutional overview, most effective progress is made at a School level. Members enquired as to whether the gender ratio of postgraduate students differs depending on where they completed their undergraduate degree. The Proctor mentioned that the University would have this data.

The meeting adjourned.

The next meeting of the School Presidents Forum is on the 9th of April 2018 at 5pm in the Students Association Committee Room.