

WSU Student Council

10/02/2022 at 17:15 (Online via MS Teams)

Attendance

Members in Attendance:	Staff in Attendance:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ragnar Mularczyk (Chair/VP Education) - Liam Lees (President) - Victoria Tanimowo (BAME Network) - Joseph Burfitt (Artistic, Martial Arts Sports) - Harvey Bowron (Individual Sports) - Tereza Vidrová (BPS College Rep) - Sarah Phillips (AEH College Rep) - Harry South (Rag Chair) - Isobel Price (General Interest Societies) - Drew Humphry (LGBTQ+ Network) - Emma Banks (Mature, Parents & Carers) - Archie Eaton (Disability Network) 	Tim Hewes-Belton (Chairs Aid) Jack Appleby (Minuting Secretary) Sophie Williams (CEO)
	Apologies:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Neve Ricketts (Vice President Student Activities) - Grace Bell (Sustainability) - Josh Jones (Charity & Volunteering Societies) - Vanessa Gakuba (Faith & Cultural Societies) - Abigail Lumbard (General Interest Societies)

Agenda

	ITEM
1.	Welcome & Introductions
2.	Apologies
3.	Declaration of interest
4.	Minutes of previous meeting
5.	Matters arising
6.	Officer Reports
7.	Policy Motion: University Grading and Postgraduate Application Support
8.	Policy Motion: Restructure of Committee Roles for Sports Clubs and Societies
9.	Policy Motion: Student Strike
10.	Proposed update to Bye Law 6
11.	Reapproval of Policy 2018-19_006: Single Use Plastic (expired 31/01/2022)
12.	WSU Exec Update
13.	Sub Council Updates
14.	Trustee Board Update
15.	AROG Update
16.	NUS Liberation Reform
17.	Relevant Student Issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Paramedics - Vaccinations (Healthcare Students) - TCSNM (placements)
18.	All Student Meeting Update
19.	City Campus
20.	SU Elections Update
21.	Update on live (current) policy and idea progression*
22.	Peirson Renovation

23.	NUS National Conference and Elections
24.	AOB

Minutes

1.0 Welcome & Introduction

RM welcomed all members to the third Student Council of the year and informed those present that quorum for meeting had not been met and therefore no votes would be able to be taken.

2.0 Apologies

RM noted apologies, as above.

3.0 Declaration of interest

Declarations of interest were received from

- Officer Reports - RM/LL
- Student Strike policy - RM/LL

4.0 Minutes of previous meeting

The Council reviewed the minutes of the previous meeting and then took an informal vote to approve:

For - 8

Against - 0

Abstain - 0

The minutes from the Student Council on February 25th October 2021, were approved.

5.0 Matters arising

Actions	Responsible	Update
Action 21/22-01-01: Elected officers to promote NUS Tuition Fees Campaign to students via social media platforms to make them aware of it	Officers	Not Done - Contacted Bournemouth SU instead to get involved in their 'Costing your Future' campaign. This campaign has also stalled due to lack of government movement on policy.
Action 21/22-01-02: Post Wednesday 27th October, elected officers to discuss next steps of NUS Tuition Fees Campaign. This will fall in line with the government announcement.	Officers	As above campaign currently on hold.
Action 21/22-02-01: JA to add apologies to previous minutes for Issy Price & Victoria Tanimowo.	JA	Complete.

Action 21/22-02-02: LL to speak to Tramps Manager to ensure that	LL	Complete. We had this meeting and Tramps have
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messaging to students on the reasons for decanting bottles into glasses is clear.		agreed to be clearer about this. Several student groups have also utilised their social media platforms to showcase the positive changes that the business has made.
Action 21/22-02-03: THB to organise a meeting with JB outside of council, to discuss his concerns regarding social anxiety and its impact on engagement.	THB	Complete.
Action 21/22-02-04: JA to add social anxiety to the next EDI & Exec agendas.	JA	Complete.
Action 21/22-02-05: LL to follow up with Estates and Facilities regarding student concerns around cleanliness.	LL	Delayed due to Christmas and January re-inductions. Estates & Facilities have been contacted, awaiting a response.
Action 21/22-02-06: LL to confirm locations of lateral flow test baskets are (Ensuring that there is availability at City campus as well as St Johns.	LL	Complete. These can be found at both reception at City campus, St Johns campus and behind the Welcome desk at Worcester students' Union.

6.0 Officer Reports

RM & LL gave an overview of the items to note from their reports. RM also gave an update on behalf of NR.

LL's officer report highlights were:

- Planning LGBTQ+ History Month with LGBTQ+ Network
- Networked with local businesses to advertise their events to students
- Managed a successful Wellness Day event with over 600 students attending

RM's officer report highlights were:

- January Re-inductions have been delivered to increase awareness and engagement in the SU
- Planning Student Choice Awards
- Developing analysis of Timetabling Survey, breaking down the data to understand key themes in student feedback

NR's officer report highlights were:

- Varsity campaign theme will continue the #NeverOk campaign
- Neve has been having discussions with the University on the new anti-Non-Disclosure Agreement Pledge supported by NUS and the Government.

Councillors were asked if they had any questions for the Officer Team.

Due to the lack of quorum, the officer reports were put out for approval via email. The vote to approve was as follows:

For - 15

Against - 2

Abstain - 0

Student Council approved the officer's reports.

7.0 Policy Motion: University Grading and Postgraduate Application Support Motions

RM spoke on behalf of GA in their absence at Student Council.

Key points in the policy include:

- It asks the Union to work with the University to ensure consistent marking criterion which is in line with many other institutions.
- Asks the Union to work with the University to ensure that students are able to provide their grades in the format required by other institutions (when they apply for postgraduate study elsewhere).
- Asks the Union to take the formal position of supporting a percentage marking system rather than the current A to E grading system.

Comments and questions from Councillors included:

- The current degree classification at Worcester translates to a no detriment policy. The current system provides students with a safety net, if the University were to change it, there could be a negative impact on students' grades.
- If the University were to move towards a percentage/rounding system, there could be a significant increase in appeals & mitigating circumstances.
- If there is an issue around supporting students looking at doing postgrad degrees at other universities. Then there needs to be work done on supporting students not changing the current marking/grading system.

RM highlighted that the University are already having a discussion around changing the grading system and moving to a percentage marking system.

Due to the complexity of this policy, Student Council decided to postpone a decision on this policy. This policy will be discussed at the next Student Council.

8.0 Policy Motion: Restructure of Committee Roles for Sports Clubs and Societies



THB spoke on behalf of NR in their absence at Student Council.

Key points in the policy include:

- The policy is the result of a series of consultations with committees held at Team Worc Council. It reorganises the core committee roles reducing the required number from 4 to 3 and addresses the uneven distribution of responsibilities.
- The role of Chair will be maintained
- The Treasurer and Secretary roles will be merged into the new role of Vice Chair- Finance & Admin and the Inclusivity Rep role will be expanded to include promotion and be renamed Vice Chair Inclusivity and Promotion.
- All additional roles would need to be approved by the SU annually.
- Despite inclusivity having a role to support it, all committee members will be responsible for ensuring their area of responsibility is inclusive.
- A proposal to change the name 'committee' to 'executive' was not approved at Team Worc Council and has therefore not come to Student Council for approval.

Comments and questions from Councillors included:

- Councillors felt that including inclusivity in every role is essential and commendable.
- Some worried that the title 'Finance' & 'Admin' be a deterrent, viewed as a dull or scary role. THB clarified that this had been the preferred title in consultations.

Due to Student Council the lack of quorum, the Councillors present agreed that it was straightforward enough to be put out to a vote via email. The vote to approve was as follows:


- For - 16
- Against - 0
- Abstain - 1

The Restructure of Committee Roles for Sports Clubs and Societies policy was approved by Student Council and is assigned to the Vice President Student Activities oversee its implementation.

9.0 Policy Motion: Student Strike

LL gave an overview of the policy put forward by the Elected Officers. The policy would mandate the SU to support NUS' Student Strike and to encourage student participation on Wednesday 2nd March 2022

Key issues raised in the policy were:

- If the structure or regulation of the education system changes then future students will see the impact of those changes.
 - Graduates may be impacted in the future. A lifelong education system is a likely outcome of current government plans, and this may impact on current students if they need to access education again.
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The policy would require the Union to:

- publicly supports NUS' Student Strike Campaign/Teach In and promotes it to its members (students at the University of Worcester).
- publicise how students can get involved virtually as well as in person.
- send a delegation of students to the Teach In event in London on 2nd March 2022.

Comments and questions from Councillors included:

- The policy proposes that the Union publicly supports the campaign. What message are the SU publicly proposing? I think the students need to agree what message and actions the SU are taking before approving.
- Providing students with an understanding of their rights when striking, so they can exercise their rights within the rules of the law.
- The message 'STRIKE' that NUS is promoting is unclear.
- The officers made clear to councillors that this was about ensuring that Worcester students had a voice in shaping NUS policy and would not require the Union to support the outcome of the work undertaken at the Teach In.

It was decided by those present that this could be taken to a vote via email. The vote to approve was as follows:

- For - 9
- Against - 2
- Abstain - 6

The Student Strike policy was approved by Student Council and is assigned to the President to oversee implementation.

10.0 Proposed update to Bye Law 6: Societies, Sports Clubs and Student Led Services

SW gave an overview of the proposed change to the Bye Law 6

The key change is as follow


It would allow the Union to a remove a committee member from their position, **at its discretion without going through the disciplinary process, if a member is shown to have breached the Code of Conduct by evidence of external investigations including, but not limited to, the University, the Police and/or local authorities.** Comments and questions from Councillors included:

- The policy does not specify who would be in charge in making these final decisions.

The Bye Law 6 amendment was approved via email and the vote was as follows:

- For - 16
- Against - 0
- Abstain - 1

The proposed updates to WSU Bye Law 6 were approved by Student Council and are assigned to the Student Engagement Manager to ensure it goes to the Trustee Board for final approval.



11.0 Reapproval of Policy 2018-19 006: Single Use Plastic (expired 31/01/2022)

THB explained that this is a current policy that is due to expire, the Union proposes that Council reapprove as there is still work to be done on reducing single use plastic within the Union.

The vote to approve was conducted via email and was as follows:

- For - 16
- Against - 0
- Abstain - 1

The Single Use Plastic was re-approved by Student Council and is assigned to the President to oversee implementation.

12.0 WSU Executive Committee Update

RM gave the Council a reminder of the purpose of Executive Committee and then an overview of the most recent meetings of the Executive Committee.

The following Ideas have been discussed and approved via the Ideas Forum:

- Free period posters have now been updated across the union.
- Recycling bins on City Campus (outside)
- Calma-Tea, Arts & Mindfulness on Campus

Progress toward the following passed ideas and policies that have been discussed:

- Bookshelf swap has now been completed.

Women's workout hour, progress is underway. Other key agenda items included:

- Tracking of progress of officer objectives
- Approval of new Dodgeball sports club

No questions were asked.

13.0 Sub Council Updates

Education Council

RM gave an overview of the most recent Education Council (24/01/2022).

Key highlights included:

- A passed policy submitted by a School Rep around University grading
- A discussion of the Course Experience Survey and the analysis done on course level engagement across a number of years to identify those courses that are persistently low in scores. This included a discussion on possible actions to be taken.
- A discussion on low levels of student engagement and how we can utilise the academic representation system when trying to improve overall engagement levels.
- The upcoming Student Choice Awards, shortlisting opportunities for School Reps

No further questions or comments were received.

Team Worc Council

THB provided an update on behalf of NR that the third TeamWorc Council of the year (20/01/2022) had been a really positive and productive meeting. Key agenda items and outcomes included:

- Committee role amendment policy
- Annual Student Meeting
- Volunteering week
- Varsity
- Upcoming events from sports and societies and how we can support them to increase attendance and engagement

No Questions or comments were received following NRs update.

Welfare & Inclusion Council (W&IC)

LL gave an overview of the last W&IC held on 02/02/2022.

Key agenda items had included:

- A discussion on the potential need for a Men's Network/Rep
- Plans for the upcoming NUS Liberation Conference
- A discussion on the proposed NUS Liberation Reform
- A presentation followed by a discussion on Inclusive Sport & Diversity in Sport at the SU.

No questions were asked.

14.0 Trustee Board Summary

SW reminded the Councillors of the function of the Trustee Board.

LL then gave an overview of the most recent meeting held on 25/01/2022. Key Agenda items included:


- Advice & Welfare Dept presented to the Trustee Board of an overview of their work so far this year and the challenges and opportunities faced
- The Board looked at the University's new senior leadership structure
- A discussion on concerns that the University is facing a challenging situation in terms of student recruitment.
- An update on Union accounts
- An update on Students' Union operational plan
- A discussion on the upcoming budget submission for annual block grant for 2022-23.

ACTION - JA to send out a summary of the operational plan progress to all student councillors

No further questions were asked.

15.0 AROG Annual Report/AROG Update

RM explained that the Union collaborates with the members of the Academic Representation Oversight Group and the Student Engagement, Representation and Communications to produce



an annual report on the Academic Representation system each year and invited councillors to take the time to read it.

RM then gave an overview of the most recent AROG meeting (15/12/2021). Agenda items included:

- An update on the current academic rep system, number of reps recruited and trained
- A discussion on rep ratios and a potential pilot scheme of 'paired reps'
- A review of current progress against the AROG Objectives Supporting students post-Christmas, due to Government guidelines.

Comments and questions from Councillors included:

- Has there been any progression on encouraging more postgraduate representatives? THB, the Union are currently in the process of reviewing the PGR system alongside the University. THB is meeting with Charlotte Taylor in the research school to establish how we can improve and increase postgraduate reps.
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16.0 NUS Liberation Reform

THB gave the group an overview of the history of NUS Liberation and how NUS define Liberation.

Key highlights of the reform are:

- NUS previously had 5 individual roles to support Liberation but in 2019 it was amended to 1 role supporting all 5 liberations
- NUS want to gather feedback from students/unions across the country to be able to improve what they do
- Reviewing their democracy model. Do we think they should go to a representative or collective democracy model?
- Should NUS Liberation be an integral part of NUS or a separate organisation

In the following discussion, comments and questions from Councillors included:

- Looking at funding, would under-represented liberation groups get the same equal opportunity to grants as those who are represented
- Donations from SU, not all SUs can afford to donate money. How do we ensure that the smaller financial unions are supported with their liberation needs?

No further questions were received.

17.0 Relevant Student Issues/Feedback from Councillors

The officers gave an overview of student issues identified by the SU. These included:

- Paramedic Students, RM has been consulting with the students and university to ensure that students know what is going on and our feeling supported throughout the process.
 - There has been some issues regarding the government mandate for vaccinations for professionals within the healthcare environment and some students faced being removed from their course due to their vaccination status. This has now been resolved due to a Government U turn.
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- Feedback from students within Three Counties School of Nursing & Midwifery, across all variations of nursing degree. The SU are working with university and students to resolve these concerns early on and will be having a meeting soon with Reps and the Head of School.

Councillors then raised/discussed the following issues

- Staff illness is continuing to have an impact and is causing disruption.
- There are issues in terms of waiting times and demand for mental health support & counselling
- Students feel that lecturers have been facing issues around mental health as well as students.
- There have been changes to Mitigating Circumstances, with reference to evidence required when claiming for mental health. This change may have an increased strain on the current service. THB will feed this back to Kate Gynn.

ACTION - RM to catch up with Ellie Tomlinson to clarify any concerns within the school around staff illnesses and students not feeling supported.

ACTION - LL to extend invitation to councillors around inviting students to work with the SU to discuss the University provision around supporting students with Mental Health.

ACTION - THB to make Kate Gynn aware of changes that have been made to mitigating circumstances processes, with particular focus around evidencing claims around mental health.

18.0 All Student Meeting

THB gave an update on the upcoming All Student Meeting, which takes place on 15th February 2022 and asked councillors to attend if possible.

No questions on the report were received.

19.0 City Campus

RM gave an update on SU activities at City Campus including:

- Recycling Bins at City Campus, this started as an Idea through the SU Ideas Forum. This has now been actioned and the bins will be installed at City campus in the near future.


No comments or questions were raised by councillors.

20.0 SU Elections Update

THB gave update to Student Council about Worcester Students' Union upcoming elections. RM/LL disclosed that they and NR have decided not to rerun for their positions for the upcoming year.

THB gave an overview of how councillors can get involved as candidates or alternatively supporting the Union in encouraging students to vote.

21.0 Update on live (current) policy and ideas progression



This item was starred.

22.0 Peirson Renovations (We Are Beard)

RM gave an update that Peirson building will be undergoing renovation and that he is part of a working group overseeing this work and has been asked to get student feedback on a mural to be produced by the local company We Are Beard.

RM presented to council a We Are Beard portfolio of work they have previously done. RM then invited student councillors to take part in focus group help guide what students want from the mural.

ACTION - RM to invite student councillors to be part of Peirson mural design focus group.

23.0 NUS National Conference & Elections

THB gave an overview of the upcoming NUS Conference & Officer Elections. THB outlined that we still have a vacancy for a female delegate to attend NUS National Conference. THB asked any councillors who identify as female and would like to attend to contact him.

THB outlined that due to the date of the conference that student councillors will be emailed outside of the Council to allow them opportunity to comment on policies and election recommendations at NUS Conference.

24.0 AOB

No additional business was discussed.

The meeting was brought to a close. The next Student Council will take place on 7th April 2022.

ACTIONS

Action 21/22-03-01: Send out a summary of the operational plan progress to all student councillors

Action 21/22-03-02: RM to catch up with Ellie Tomlinson to clarify any concerns within the school around staff illnesses and students not feeling supported.

Action 21/22-03-03: LL to extend invitation to councillors around inviting students to work with the SU to discuss the University provision around supporting students with Mental Health.

Action 21/22-03-04: THB to make Kate Gynn aware of changes that have been made to mitigating circumstances processes, with particular focus around evidencing claims around mental health.

Action 21/22-03-05: RM to invite student councillors to be part of Peirson mural design focus group.

