

**Student Council**

***12th December 2013***

**Review of Officer Positions for 2014 Elections**

**Purpose: To review the make-up of Officer Positions**

**Author: Kynton Swingle - President**

With the 2014 SU Leadership Elections looming ever closer, and the rumour mill slowly starting to turn into action, this Council is the only opportunity we have before elections materials go live to make any changes to the make-up of the Executive Committee or to the election process. This paper is purely to stir debate and conversation around the make-up of the elected positions and to ensure that our elected positions are appropriate for the needs of the students at Worcester.

From experiences over our time in the roles, and numerous conversations with not only Lee but also with SU staff and various students, it’s clear that one of the conversation points should be held around the role of Vice-President Student Experience. The first point to make is what actually is the ‘student experience’? We know that students experience an infinite number of things during their time at University from academic experiences, social experiences, extra-curricular experiences, welfare experiences the list goes on. With all of these experiences falling under the various remits of the Students’ Union officers, regardless of their title, is Vice-President Student Experience an appropriate title for a position that looks after a very specific segment of the student experience?

Another key point around this particular position refers to the terms of their job description, in particular the line:

**“Initiate and co-ordinate campaigns which support students’ welfare, in conjunction with the student advisor”**

This simply outlines that the remit of welfare falls under the role of VP Student Experience. If we look back a few years, the remit of welfare fell under the previous position of Vice-President Education and Welfare, but was moved across to the role of Student Experience for various reasons (such as workload allocation). Whilst this may have been a welcome relief to any incoming Education officers who now had one less job on their checklist, it was a short-sighted move in terms of work-load allocation. Over the last two years we’ve held various conversations in the SU around the allocation of welfare amongst positions. The Students’ Union sees welfare as an important issue, and raising awareness as well as campaigning on important welfare issues is something we should strive to do, however having it as a ‘bolt on’ to a position as opposed to having it as an integrated part of that position isn’t the best approach.

Some suggested ideas:

* Having Welfare as a role in all job descriptions of full-time officers
* Having a welfare part-time officer

One of the key discussion points from this paper is around part-time officer positions. With the continuing growing in strength of Council it raises various important questions around elections of part-time officer positions. The part-time officer positions we currently have are:

* International Students Officer
* Sustainability Officer
* Raise and Give Officer
* Diversity Officer
* Representation Officer
* Mature Students Officer

Every few years we revise the appropriateness of the officer make-up, for example a few years ago we replaced the Events and Campaigns Officer position with the Raise and Give Officer to better serve our student membership. Whilst there are hundreds of different part-time officer positions around the country ranging from welfare officers, communication officers, student voice officers to the various liberation campaigns officers (see Zac’s motion for more info), it raises the debate of what would serve our student body the best.

I could write a lengthy document about this particular issue and be misunderstood in the process, therefore I am making no suggestions on what I would do or not do, however I ask Council various questions:

* Is the current make-up of part-time officers appropriate and is it serving the needs of our student body?
* With the growing in Council numbers over the last two years and the reliance on the Executive Committee less than in previous years, do we need elected part-time officers or would cross-campus elected Student Councilors be more suitable?
* Should part-time officer/student council elections be held at the same time as full-time officer elections to give them more prominence?

Again, this is document about creating a discussion as to what would best serve our student body. Please bring any ideas, questions and comments to Council or get in contact with me before the meeting.