**Student Council**

**Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 13th January 2015 from 17:15 in EE1107**

|  |
| --- |
| 1. **Present**   **Student Councillors**: Wes Hudson (President), Tom Clarke (Vice President Education), Abi Clarke (Vice President Student Activities), Helen Manners (Mature Students’ Officer – apologies for late arrival), Jack Buczynski (RAG Officer), Jess Cashin (LGBT Officer), Connor Allen (Student Disability Officer), Christina Harris (Minority Ethnic Officer), Ben Norris (mature students), Claudia Calin (non-UK students), Allie Gentle (RAG), Joe Hayes (Societies), Diane Noble (Institute of Humanities and Creative Arts), Philip Brookes (co-opted), Zac Pritchard (co-opted – apologies for late arrival), Josh Ware (SU sports), Chris Newbould (co-opted)  Also in attendance: Ellen Joyce (Chair); Ruth Christie (Membership Services Manager); Paul Johnston (Chief Executive); Michael Sherratt (applicant)    Resigned since previous Student Council: Jane Abbott (Sustainability)  Absent: Madalina Orzan-Dragos (postgraduate students), Thomas Beale (RAG), Becky-Lou Small (LGBT students), Tina Wootton-Porter (SU societies), Rebecca Jones (Sustainability) |
| 1. **Apologies**   Savannah Ju (Non-UK Students’ Officer), Sarah Meyrick (Institute of Health and Society), Alex Giles (Institute of Sport and Exercise Science), Vanessa Gordon (Sustainability Officer), Georgie Bull (Welfare Officer), Nicki Le Page (Institute of Science and the Environment), Chantal Vinyard (Women’s Officer), Munifa Rauf (Black and minority ethnic students), Val Turner (co-opted), Mihaela Getzova (Worcester Business School), Jeremy Hanley-Keeley (Commuting students) |
| Ten minutes after the meeting was due to begin, only 15 out of 33 current Student Councillors were present and the number required for the meeting to be quorate (and for voting to take place) is 50% + 1 of the membership. The Chair explained this and proposed two options – one to postpone the meeting and the second for those present to work through the agenda and discuss items, but to defer voting to the next quorate meeting. Student Councillors decided not to postpone the meeting. |
| 1. **Minutes of the previous meeting held on 25th November 2014**   Chris suggested that the minutes were not an accurate reflection of the discussion about the University ID card and asked that they be amended to include the suggestion that the University might consider issuing a three-year student card with an end date.  [The minutes](file:///\\Staff.worc.ac.uk\shared\Students%20Union\Governance\Student%20Council\2014-15\2015-01-13%20Student%20Council\2014-11-25%20Amended%20minutes%20as%20agreed%202015-01-13.docx) have now been amended as proposed. |
| 1. **Officers’ reports**   The Chair asked if any of the officers had anything to add to their reports.  [President’s report](file:///\\Staff.worc.ac.uk\shared\Students%20Union\Governance\Student%20Council\2014-15\2015-01-13%20Student%20Council\2015-01-13%20President%20report.docx)  Wes said that 583 students have now registered online as volunteers and have so far logged 12,747 hours of volunteering. He said that today’s Housing Fair was a great success – it was well-attended by students and there was positive feedback from both students and the landlords who attended. Wes also informed Student Council that the SU has now signed up free to the [UK Council for International Student Affairs](http://www.ukcisa.org.uk/) , which means that we will receive information and advice for international students.  [Vice President Education’s report](file:///\\Staff.worc.ac.uk\shared\Students%20Union\Governance\Student%20Council\2014-15\2015-01-13%20Student%20Council\2015-01-13%20VP%20Education%20Report.docx)  Tom said that he hopes to meet University of Worcester StARs based in the West Country when he visits Roche in Cornwall on 6th February to run a training session for students from partner colleges. He hopes that an Institute Rep will be able to accompany him.  [LGBT Officer’s report](file:///\\Staff.worc.ac.uk\shared\Students%20Union\Governance\Student%20Council\2014-15\2015-01-13%20Student%20Council\2015-01-13%20LGBT%20Officer%20Report.docx)  Jess gave a verbal report. She explained that the LGBT Society and a group of drama students are planning a series of pop-up performances during February (LGBT History Month), which will now focus on opposition to transgender “conversion therapy”, which was highlighted by the suicide of transgender teenager Leelah Alcorn in Ohio in December 2014.  [Student Disability Officer’s report](file:///\\Staff.worc.ac.uk\shared\Students%20Union\Governance\Student%20Council\2014-15\2015-01-13%20Student%20Council\2015-01-13%20Student%20Disability%20Officer%20Report.docx)  Connor and Christina attended the University’s Diversity and Equality Committee on Monday 12th January. There was discussion about the effectiveness of the committee in driving policy and practice and it was agreed that the University should be asked to consider appointing a member of staff to lead on Diversity and Equality. Christina added that not all Institutes are currently represented on the committee, with overrepresentation from the Institute of Education. Every Institute is to be asked to nominate a member of staff who will have responsibility for diversity and equality issues and will be a member of the committee. Connor pointed out that staff are not receiving diversity and equality training. Zac asked whether the LGBT staff network will still continue and Christina said it will.  [Non-UK Students’ Officer’s report](file:///\\Staff.worc.ac.uk\shared\Students%20Union\Governance\Student%20Council\2014-15\2015-01-13%20Student%20Council\2015-01-13%20Non-UK%20Students%20Officer%20Report.docx)  In Savannah’s absence, Claudia introduced the report, which includes a suggestion that international students should be allowed to have access to a language dictionary during exams. There was some discussion about whether this would be appropriate or whether allowing the use of dictionaries would mean failing to test what students should know anyway. Tom suggested that Savannah should discuss the question with the International Office. Paul pointed out that the exam regulations quoted in the report relate to a particular Business School Module, which allows a wide range of other materials to be taken in to the exam. He suggested that Savannah could bring a proposal to the next Student Council meeting for further consideration.  [Mature Students’ Officer’s report](file:///\\Staff.worc.ac.uk\shared\Students%20Union\Governance\Student%20Council\2014-15\2015-01-13%20Student%20Council\2015-01-13%20Mature%20Students'%20Officer%20report.docx)  [RAG Officer’s report](file:///\\Staff.worc.ac.uk\shared\Students%20Union\Governance\Student%20Council\2014-15\2015-01-13%20Student%20Council\2015-01-13%20RAG.docx)  [Sustainability Officer’s report](file:///\\Staff.worc.ac.uk\shared\Students%20Union\Governance\Student%20Council\2014-15\2015-01-13%20Student%20Council\2015-01-13%20Sustainability%20Officer%20report.docx)  [Vice President Student Activities report](file:///\\Staff.worc.ac.uk\shared\Students%20Union\Governance\Student%20Council\2014-15\2015-01-13%20Student%20Council\2015-01-13%20VP%20Student%20Activities%20Report.docx)  [Welfare Officer’s report](file:///\\Staff.worc.ac.uk\shared\Students%20Union\Governance\Student%20Council\2014-15\2015-01-13%20Student%20Council\2015-01-13%20Welfare%20Officer%20report.docx) |
| 1. **Module selection procedure**   Tom outlined the University’s plans to introduce a new, demand-led approach to timetabling. He explained that, two years ago, many students were unhappy that they were unable to choose the modules they wanted to study because they were full. The benefit to students of the current system is that they can see in advance when classes are timetabled and some may base their module selection on this information. The University’s response to the problem of over-subscribed modules is to remove the cap on numbers to allow student choice, but this will mean that timetables cannot be sorted until all students have made their choices. He said that he was personally in favour of the new system, which is about to be introduced for students selecting modules to study in 2015/16.  The new approach to timetabling was discussed, with concerns expressed about the difficulties some groups of students may face if they don’t know the timetable at the point at which they choose their modules, particularly students with family commitments, childcare needs, commuters and those with part-time jobs. Tom explained that Registry plans to make the timetable available in early July, which would give students two months to make the necessary arrangements or to change to different modules. Some Student Councillors felt the new system would be good, as more students will be able to study popular modules and it’s more likely that appropriate rooms will be allocated.  Tom said that, in response to a request from the SU, the Academic Registrar, Kevin Pickess, has agreed to meet Institute Reps next Tuesday, 20th January, to explain the new procedure to them, to listen to students’ concerns and to answer students’ questions. |
| 1. **New Student Councillor appointment**   The meeting was now quorate, since the arrival of Zac and Helen, so the Chair invited Student Council applicant, Michael Sherratt, to explain his reasons for standing. Michael explained that he is a first-year, mature student and long-term resident. He is a StAR and keen to get more involved with the SU. A former chef and Scout master, Michael now helps with a local Beaver Scouts group and his local church and plans to encourage people to get involved with a local nature reserve. He is asking to be considered for one of the two vacant “Community volunteering” places on Student Council and confirmed that he is logging his volunteering online with the SU.  The Chair asked Michael to leave the room and Student Councillors were invited to vote on whether Michael should become a new Student Councillor. There was a unanimous vote in favour of Michael joining Student Council and he was welcomed back to join the meeting. |
| 1. [**Disability Sport Society constitution**](file:///\\Staff.worc.ac.uk\shared\Students%20Union\Governance\Student%20Council\2014-15\2015-01-13%20Student%20Council\2015-01-13%20Disability%20Sport%20Constitution.docx)   Connor explained that the University of Worcester champions disability sport, so the proposal is to set up a new society which would allow members to try out a range of disability sports with the help of external coaches who can coach sports outside University staff’s areas of expertise. He confirmed that the society would be open to all students, although it was likely to have a core membership of students studying disability sports. Chris asked why the constitution did not mention having a members’ representative and Abi explained that the only roles a new society is required to have are chair, treasurer and secretary. She said that in most cases it would fall within the role of the chair to ensure that members are consulted and communicated with effectively.  Connor declared his interest and abstained and the Disability Sport Society was approved, with all other members of Student Council voting in favour of approval. |
| 1. **Approval of minutes of previous meeting**   With Student Council now quorate, the Chair asked for approval of the minutes of the meeting held on 25th November, on the understanding that the amendments requested are made. With two abstentions, the minutes were approved. |
| At this point in the meeting, Jess, Philip and Ben left, so Student Council was no longer quorate. |
| 1. **Refreshers/RAG Week**   Tom informed Student Council that the SU has decided to hold a Refreshers/RAG Week during week commencing Monday 2nd February 2015. There will be a Refreshers’ Fair (with commercial stalls) in the SU on Monday 2nd February. On Tuesday 3rd, the Finance Manager, Brian Hooper will be available to convert students’ loose change into bank notes, with a small fee being donated to RAG funds and there will be a quiz in the Pear Tree. On Wednesday, 4th February, there will be a Sports and Societies Fair and Tramps will run a “Rags”-themed evening. On Thursday 5th February there will be a Bavariafest in the Pear Tree and on Friday 6th there may be a 24-hour karaoke event.  There will be a meeting with Tramps on 14th January to discuss how the club will support RAG through the events they’re running during Refreshers Week.  Helen asked if there would be an opportunity for the Mature Students’ Society to have a tie-in to an event which could be targeted specifically at mature students. Tom said that should be fine. Josh suggested that there could be some intramural sports activities and Jack said that RAG would be organising a book and magazine collection for local charities. Wes pointed out that there is now a RAG total counter on the front of the SU website. |
| 1. **Socials on University campus**   Abi explained that in September, the University banned “socials” on campus. The consequence of this decision was that there were further disturbances in the local community. The “Sshh” campaign made local residents more aware of students in the community. The University’s ban was specifically targeted at members of sports clubs, which was seen as unfair. As a result, the SU has been in negotiations with the University and a compromise has been reached: a “contract for responsible socials” has been drawn up which requires everyone living in a particular flat to agree to a “social” being held there and there is also a new code of conduct.  In response to questions, Abi said that, if there is any trouble from a “social”, it will be the club, rather than individual signatories to the contract, who will be held responsible and penalised. She emphasised that the new arrangements apply to University-managed accommodation only and not, for instance, to the Per Tree. Abi stressed that the SU has put a lot of work in to improving the student experience this semester, but she also said that student safety is very important. Chris suggested that making clubs and societies accountable for their members’ behaviour was to be commended. Michael observed that the campus is very quiet in the evenings and he wonders whether students living here have access to a good range of social opportunities. Tom commented that the University’s senior management team are focused on recruitment, rather than the experience of current students. |
| 1. **Student Council approval of new student trustee**   Wes explained that Student Council’s approval of the appointment of Alice as a new student trustee is sought, but as the meeting was no longer quorate it was not possible to do this. |
| 1. **SU leadership elections 2015**   Ruth alerted Student Councillors to the fact that nominations will open for this year’s officer elections on Monday 26th January. She urged Student Councillors to consider standing as candidates for either a full-time or part-time officer roles and reminded current part-time officers not in their final year that they could stand again. Ruth also asked Student Councillors to help raise awareness of the elections and to speak directly to students to ask them to think about standing and voting. She outlined the role of the Elections Committee and invited Student Councillors to consider joining this group.  [Elections timetable](file:///\\Staff.worc.ac.uk\shared\Students%20Union\Governance\Student%20Council\2014-15\2015-01-13%20Student%20Council\2015-01-13%20Elections%20timetable.docx)  [Elections committee outline](file:///\\Staff.worc.ac.uk\shared\Students%20Union\Elections\Elections%202015\2015%20Elections%20Committee%20explanation%20for%20Student%20Council.docx)  [Elections Committee declaration form](file:///\\Staff.worc.ac.uk\shared\Students%20Union\Governance\Student%20Council\2014-15\2015-01-13%20Student%20Council\2015-01-13%20Elections%20Committee%20declaration%20form.docx)  Student Councillors with any questions about the elections are welcome to talk to Paul, Ruth, Tom (who is in his second year and therefore not eligible to stand for election again) or any of the current officers. |
| 1. **Date of next meeting**   The next meeting of Student Council will take place on **Tuesday 10th February** *(not March, as stated at the meeting)* 2015 from 17:15 – 19:15 in EE1107. |