**Student Council**

**Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 14th April 2015 from 17:15 in EE1107**

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| 1. **Present**

**Student Councillors:** Wes Hudson (President),Tom Clarke (Vice President Education), Abi Clarke (Vice President Student Activities), Savannah Ju (Non-UK Students’ Officer), Jack Buczynski (RAG Officer), Claudia Calin (Non-UK Students), Madalina Orzan-Dragos (Postgraduate students), Thomas Beale (RAG), Alice Gentle (RAG), Tina Wootton-Porter (SU societies), Michael Sherratt (community volunteering), Diane Noble (Institute of Humanities and Creative Arts), Alex Giles (Institute of Sport and Exercise Science), Nicki Le Page (Institute of Science and the Environment), Val Turner (co-opted), Becky-Lou Small (LGBT), Frances Storey (students with a disability) Also in attendance: Ellen Joyce (Chair), Ruth Christie (Membership Services Manager), Paul Johnston (Chief Executive) Absent: Ben Norris (Mature Students), Sarah Meyrick (Institute of Health and Society), Rebecca Jones (Sustainability), Jeremy Hanley-Keeley (commuting students), Munifa Rauf (black and minority ethnic students) |
| 1. **Apologies**

Vanessa Gordon (Sustainability Officer), Chantal Vinyard (Women’s Officer), Jess Cashin (LGBT Officer), Connor Allen (Student Disability Officer), Christina Harris (Minority Ethnic Officer), Georgie Bull (Welfare Officer), Zac Pritchard (co-opted), Chris Newbould (co-opted), Mihaela Getzova (Worcester Business School)The Chair explained that Helen Manners has resigned from the position of Mature Students’ Officer, so is no longer a Student Councillor.  |
| 1. **Declarations of interest**

The Chair said that Madalina Orzan-Dragos (who had not arrived at that time) has an interest in the Nightlife Society and will not take part in the vote on whether this new society should be approved.  |
| 1. **Minutes of the previous Student Council meeting held on Tuesday 10th March 2015.**

A spelling mistake was pointed out and the minutes were then approved as an accurate record of the meeting. |
| 1. **Matters arising from the minutes**

There were none. |
| 1. **Officers’ reports**

The Chair asked the officers in attendance if they wished to add anything to their reports. The following reports had been circulated to Student Council in advance of the meeting:[President’s report](file:///%5C%5CStaff.worc.ac.uk%5Cshared%5CStudents%20Union%5CGovernance%5CStudent%20Council%5C2014-15%5C2015-04-14%20Student%20Council%5C2015-04-14%20President%20Report%20Wesley%20Hudson.docx)[Vice President Education report](file:///%5C%5CStaff.worc.ac.uk%5Cshared%5CStudents%20Union%5CGovernance%5CStudent%20Council%5C2014-15%5C2015-04-14%20Student%20Council%5C2015-04-14%20Vice%20President%20Education%20Report%20Tom%20Clarke.docx)[LGBT Officer report](file:///%5C%5CStaff.worc.ac.uk%5Cshared%5CStudents%20Union%5CGovernance%5CStudent%20Council%5C2014-15%5C2015-04-14%20Student%20Council%5C2015-04-14%20LGBT%20Officer%20Report%20Jess%20Cashin.docx)[RAG Officer report](file:///%5C%5CStaff.worc.ac.uk%5Cshared%5CStudents%20Union%5CGovernance%5CStudent%20Council%5C2014-15%5C2015-04-14%20Student%20Council%5C2015-04-14%20RAG%20Officer%20report.docx)[Sustainability Officer report](file:///%5C%5CStaff.worc.ac.uk%5Cshared%5CStudents%20Union%5CGovernance%5CStudent%20Council%5C2014-15%5C2015-04-14%20Student%20Council%5C2015-04-14%20Sustainability%20Officer%20Report%20Vanessa%20Gordon.docx)[Welfare Officer report](file:///%5C%5CStaff.worc.ac.uk%5Cshared%5CStudents%20Union%5CGovernance%5CStudent%20Council%5C2014-15%5C2015-04-14%20Student%20Council%5C2015-04-14%20Welfare%20officer%20report%20Georgina%20Bull.docx)The Non-UK Students’ Officer reported that the language cafés, run by members of the International Students’ Committee, are proving successful, with French, Spanish and Chinese currently being offered. There will also be an international tea party towards the end of April, where students from difference parts of the world will make and serve teas from their home countries.The President gave an update on the number of unverified volunteering hours logged on the website, which now stands at over 23,500. He also reported that he is currently organising a hustings for General Election parliamentary candidates for Worcester, which will take place on Thursday 30th April from 13:15 – 14:15 in the Urwin lecture theatre. He confirmed that all 7 candidates are to be invited to the event, which will be chaired by the University’s Academic Registrar, Kevin Pickess. The Vice President Student Activities explained that she has been away for the past two weeks, so was unable to submit a written report. She and the President took a group of 44 students on a break to Amsterdam and then last week she accompanied members of sports clubs to Salou for “Tour”. Abi will now be concentrating on organising Varsity. Last year, the University of Gloucester won 8-6 but this year the number of events has increased to 20, which should give Worcester a better chance of winning. Abi would like to see as many students as possible coming to the events to support the teams, particularly on Wednesday 29th April when there are sporting events all day at the Arena. On Saturday 16th May, Spotlight are hosting an Arts Festival, supported by a grant of £500 from the SU. Plans are also progressing for Celebration Week, when we will have the Student-Led Teaching Awards on Tuesday 26th, the Colours Ball at the Bank House on Wednesday 27th, the new Societies Ball on Thursday 28th at the Cricket Ground and the VoScAs at the Racecourse on Friday 29th. The Vice President Education explained that, as he’s approaching the end of his second year in office, he thought it would be a good time to review his manifesto. He commented that once a full-time officer is elected, s/he soon realises that it won’t be possible to achieve some of the aims for various reasons. After negotiating with the University about printer credit for students, Tom was given confirmation just yesterday that, from September 2015, all students will be given £10 credit which can only be used for printing. At the end of every academic year, any underspend will be carried forward and added to the following year’s credit. Having researched the cost of printing in other universities, Tom has concluded that the charges at Worcester are around average and he confirmed that the University has no plans to reduce these. He knows that Worcester Weeks are still not popular with many students, who would prefer to have “reading weeks”. Next year, there will only be two Worcester Weeks, with the first one in October being dropped. The University had originally planned to introduce online submission across the institution from the 2015-16 academic year, but this has now been postponed while the University investigates alternatives to Turnitin. Tom acknowledged that there is no possibility of free parking being introduced at The Hive, but he reminded Student Councillors that the University has now bought the car park at The Moors and University parking permits allow drivers to use that facility at no extra cost. Last year, only around 20 StARs logged their volunteering hours, but this year approximately 250 have signed up on the website. The purple hoodies have proved very popular and Tom has it on good authority that the University is happy to continue to fund these in the future. As two Student Councillors need to leave at 7pm, the Chair moved on to issues which require discussion and voting, returning later to the Vice President Student Activities’ review of her manifesto.  |
| 1. **Review of bye-law 5**

The Chair asked the Chief Executive to explain this to Student Council.Paul reminded Student Councillors that, at the previous meeting on 10th March 2015, they had voted not to run a by-election this semester for the unfilled part-time positions. He explained that Student Council must now decide when elections for part-time positions will be held in future. The first question to be answered is whether part-time officer elections should continue to be held at the same time as the election of full-time officers. Student Councillors were invited to discuss the options. Arguments for continuing to hold elections for part-time officers at the same time as elections for full-time officers included:* March is a good time of year for candidates, as they don’t have as many demands on their time as at other times of the year
* Electing part-time officers in March means that they have time to learn about the role from the current officer and a handover period can be incorporated

Arguments for separating part-time officer elections from full-time officer elections included:* The elections for full-time officers tend to overshadow those for part-time officers – separating them would allow for better promotion of the opportunities and should help to increase the numbers standing and voting for part-time positions

The proposal was then put to the vote, with Student Council asked**Should elections for part-time officers be kept with the elections for full-time officers?****Yes: 1****No: 16****Abstain: 0**Student Councillors were then asked to consider whether the part-time officer elections should be held immediately after the full-time officer elections (in March). The following points were made:* Holding elections for part-time officers in October would mean that first-year students could stand and vote
* If there’s a bigger gap between elections, the number of students voting is likely to be higher – students won’t want to vote twice in March
* If part-time officers are already in post in advance of the summer, they can spend time during the break preparing for the new academic year
* If part-time officers are elected in October, they won’t know what to do and there won’t be any handover
* Whoever’s elected has to shape the role for themselves, so it’s not necessary to have a handover period
* In the world of work, you wouldn’t usually have a handover period – you just have to learn on the job
* Good training is more important than a handover
* October’s too early for first-year students to understand what the elections are all about and they’re not likely to stand
* First-year students are often really enthusiastic and keen to get involved, plus most students have more free time in their first year than in subsequent years
* More could be done to promote opportunities before students even arrive – at open days and visit days, for instance
* Full-time officers have contact with far more students during the first month of the academic year than they do for the rest of the year and this provides lots of opportunities for them to promote the elections
* International students would be much less likely to stand if the elections are in October as they wouldn’t have found their feet by then

The proposal was then put to the vote, with Student Council asked**Should elections for part-time officers take place immediately after the full-time officer elections?****Yes: 5****No: 10****Abstain: 2**Following this decision, Student Council were then asked to vote on the following question:**Should part-time officer elections take place at the first practicable opportunity in semester 1?****Yes: 14****No: 0****Abstain: 3**As a result of Student Council’s decisions, elections for part-time officers will take place during the first half of the first semester of the academic year (probably October) |
| 1. **Unscheduled item**

The Chief Executive alerted the Chair to the fact that a student, Joe Hayes, who was in attendance, had been taking photographs of Student Councillors using his phone, without their permission. Paul asked whether Student Council should have the opportunity to decide if they were content for this to happen or if they felt that Joe should be asked to delete the photographs.The Chair asked Student Council to vote and their unanimous decision was that Joe be asked to delete the photographs from his phone. Joe was then asked to delete the photos. Another student commented that Joe had written an article for The Tab about the Consent workshop he’d attended and this article included photos taken at the training, despite delegates and the trainers not having been asked for permission to have their photos taken.  |
| 1. **Approval of clubs and societies**

[­Disney and Pixar Society](file:///%5C%5CStaff.worc.ac.uk%5Cshared%5CStudents%20Union%5CGovernance%5CStudent%20Council%5C2014-15%5C2015-04-14%20Student%20Council%5C2015-04-14%20Disney%20and%20Pixar%20Constitution%20March%202015.docx)In answer to a question, the Chair confirmed that there are no copyright issues with the society using the Disney and Pixar names within the society. Student Council approved the society unanimously.[Nightlife Wellbeing Society](file:///%5C%5CStaff.worc.ac.uk%5Cshared%5CStudents%20Union%5CGovernance%5CStudent%20Council%5C2014-15%5C2015-04-14%20Student%20Council%5C2015-04-14%20The%20Nightlife%20Wellbeing%20Society%20constitution.docx)Maddy explained that the key aim of the society is to improve student safety and wellbeing. As she had a declared interest, Maddy did not take part in the vote. The rest of Student Council approved the society unanimously. |
| 1. [**Responsible Futures**](file:///%5C%5CStaff.worc.ac.uk%5Cshared%5CStudents%20Union%5CGovernance%5CStudent%20Council%5C2014-15%5C2015-04-14%20Student%20Council%5C2015-04-14%20Responsible%20Futures.docx)

The President asked Student Council to give their approval for the SU to support the University to work towards accreditation under this NUS pilot scheme. Student Council approved this proposal unanimously. Michael asked how the SU can influence University practice in relation to environmental sustainability. The Chair suggested that he speak to the Sustainability Officer and the President to find out more.  |
| 1. **Vice President Student Activities manifesto review**

Abi presented a [review of and reflection on her manifesto aims](file:///%5C%5CStaff.worc.ac.uk%5Cshared%5CStudents%20Union%5CGovernance%5CStudent%20Council%5C2014-15%5C2015-04-14%20Student%20Council%5C2015-04-14%20Vice%20President%20Student%20Activities%20report%20and%20manifesto%20review.docx).  |
| 1. **Spotted: University of Worcester**

Fran explained that a situation occurred recently where a photo of a man in Peirson was posted on this Facebook page, suggesting that this person was a stalker. All posts on this site need to be approved by an administrator, so it is very concerning that they were allowed, given that the individual was clearly identifiable and the comments potentially libellous. If there was any kind of a safety issue, this should have been drawn to the attention of University security. Fran messaged the administrators and contacted Facebook and the offending posts were taken down. The response from Facebook was that this kind of thing is outside their jurisdiction. Val suggested that the SU might post its disapproval of these types of comments and accusations.  |
| 1. **Any other business**

Tom said that the Cricket Society is holding a raffle tomorrow, with all proceeds going to RAG and he encouraged Student Councillors to support this. The President expressed his thanks to the Chair and the part-time officers for all of their hard work over the course of the year.The Non-UK Students’ Officer said that she has not yet had any feedback in relation to the request for language dictionaries to be allowed in exams. The Vice President Education said he would follow this up.  |
| 1. **Date of next meeting**

This was the final Student Council meeting for the current academic year. |