Student Council Minutes

# Monday 30th March 2020, 17:15-19:15 (hosted online on Blackboard Collaborate)

**Agenda**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Item* |  |
|  | Welcome and introductions |
|  | Apologies |
|  | Declarations of interest |
|  | Minutes of previous meeting |
|  | Matters arising |
|  | Covid-19 |
| Reporting Items | |
|  | Update from Executive Committee |
|  | Update from the Board of Trustees |
|  | Officers’ reports – questions/comments |
| Information Items | |
|  | City Campus Update |
|  | Live Policy Update |
|  | SU Leadership Elections |
|  | NUS Conference   * Elections * Motions |
| Approval Items | |
|  | Governance Review – new Bye Laws |
| Any other business | |
|  | Any other business |
|  | Date of next meeting: |

**Attendance**

**Councillors present:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Student Council Chair | Katie Watts | KW |
| President | Harry Lonsdale | HL |
| Vice President Education | Meg Price | MP |
| Vice President Student Activities | Mike Harris | MH |
| International Students Officer | Samuel Kyei | SK |
| LGBTQ+ Officer | James Gould | JG |
| Women’s Officer | Alia Moorhouse | AM |
| General Interest Societies Rep | Danielle Jones | DJ |
| Postgraduate Rep | Afoma Obidinnu | AO |
| School of Education Rep | Kelly Chamberlain | KC |

**Also present:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Student Engagement Manager | Tim Hewes-Belton | THB |
| Chief Executive Officer | Sophie Williams | SW |
| Student Voice Assistant (minute taking) | Abbie Banner | AB |

**Apologies Received:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Sustainability Officer | Claudia Gutierrez | CG |
| Student Disability Officer | Nadine Baxter | NB |
| Welfare Officer | Amelia Price | AP |
| Non-BUCS Sports Clubs Rep | Luke Quinlan | LQ |
| School of Psychology Rep | Janne Vollan Tollefsen | JVT |
| UWIC Representative | Jorson Deep Singh | JDS |
| Academic Societies Rep | Karl Stanfield | KS |
| BUCS Sports Clubs Rep | Sophie Davies | SD |

**Minutes**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Welcome and introductions** |
|  | HL welcomed all to the March Student Council meeting online on Blackboard Collaborate, explaining that he would be acting as Chair of this meeting due to the technology system |
|  | **Apologies** |
|  | Apologies were received from Claudia Gutierrez, Nadine Baxter, Amelia Price, Luke Quinlan, Janne Vollan Tollefsen, Jorson Deep Singh, Karl Stanfield and Sophie Davies. |
|  | **Declarations of interest** |
|  | MH declared an interest in clubs, societies and student-led services, so would be abstaining from voting on approval of Bye Laws specifically about clubs, societies and student-led services.  DJ declared an interest in societies, so would be abstaining from voting on approval of Bye Laws specifically about societies. |
|  | **Minutes of previous meeting** |
|  | Vote to approve the minutes of the previous meeting:  For: 9  Against: 0  Abstain: 1  **The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting** |
|  | **Matters arising** |
|  | *Actions from 27.02.2020*   |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Action** | **Update** | | **Action 01: MH to bring the Inclusivity Rep training overview to Council to undertake a review of the Inclusivity Rep training.** | Carry forwards action to be completed at April Council meeting | | **Action 02: HL, MH and MP to continue to lobby the University to secure helmet locker space** | Ongoing | | **Action 03: HL, MP and MH to assign each current policy to one of the three full time officers’ roles before next Student Council.** | HL completed | | **Action 04: AB to circulate with Council information on the candidates running for NUS national officer positions.** | Complete | |
|  | **Covid-19** |
|  | HL acknowledged the current Covid-19 pandemic being experienced globally and locally.  HL updated Council on the University and the SU’s response to this situation, covering the following areas:   * Campus security, shop still open and student/staff card required for access to campus * University Halls staying open for those students remaining in accommodation * Academic update around extensions to deadlines noting that students can defer assignment submission date to July. Courses requiring practical assessments and placement hours such as nurses should contact their course leader directly * Supporting Course Reps to continue their roles virtually * Help & Advice service continuing to run through emails, telephone and online appointments, mostly queries around Mitigating Circumstances regarding current situation * The Coronavirus Community Facebook group set up with officers posting, encouraging students to keep community spirit * Continuing communications with society and club committees, encouraging them to run online events * The Students’ Union is looking into and reviewing student staff pay during this period * The SU has set up Here2Help a Covid-19 volunteering opportunities project in partnership with the University. The SU is also linking with local government to support students to volunteer to help local people, as well as virtual-volunteering, encouraging all students to log any volunteering they do as hours on [www.worcsu.com/volunteer](http://www.worcsu.com/volunteer)   AM noted that there has been feedback from students within the Law course who are not satisfied with some of the response around this situation. HL and AB encouraged AM and all councillors to ensure they continue to provide feedback through the usual channels of talking to their Course Reps and School Reps who can channel this feedback to staff in an appropriate manner.  THB noted that there may be professional bodies involved in the course, who would also have a role to play in setting how the course was structured.  **Action 01. THB to inform MP of feedback from Law course.**  AO noted she knows of postgraduate students and international students who are unhappy about the situation, but that as the Course Rep she would take this feedback to her next meeting.  SW noted that the International Experience Team are proactive when situations as such may arise and so encouraged AO to email HL with any particular concerns that she may be aware of around international students, as the SU can then contact this team directly.  HL acknowledged and understood there are concerns around this, reassuring council that the University is working hard to continue reviewing the full situation and support students through this time.  THB asked that if any student is having trouble contacting their Course Rep to please let the SU know.  Finally, HL reminded council that the Help and Advice service is available to all students online throughout this time. |
| Reporting Items | |
|  | **Update from Executive Committee** |
|  | HL noted that there has been no meeting since last Student Council. |
|  | **Update from the Board of Trustees** |
|  | HL updated that there had not been a Board of Trustees meeting since the last Student Council, this has been rescheduled for 03.04.2020. In this meeting they will discuss the SU response to the virus, discussing management accounts, financial procedures and reserves policy and the proposed new governing documents. |
|  | **Officers’ reports – questions/comments** |
|  | HL explained that officers’ reports had been circulated to all councillors prior to the meeting and that due to a tight schedule. There were no questions from councillors.  HL encouraged all councillors to contact any of the officers directly after this meeting if they have questions regarding their reports. |
| Information Items | |
|  | **City Campus Update** |
|  | HL updated that the SU supported the Holi Festival 2020 event at City Campus ran by the International Experience Team, UWIC and the Indian Society. MP and MH attended this colourful event with traditional Indian food, face painting and a “colour fun” arts station, increasing engagement in events at City Campus. Nothing else to update on City Campus given the current situation. |
|  | **Live Policy Update** |
|  | HL updated that as previously mentioned, the SU policies have now been assigned to each of the Officers roles, and there were no policies to bring to this council. |
|  | **SU Leadership Elections** |
|  | HL noted in the 2020 SU Leadership elections 1603 voters cast 4599 votes. This represents just less than 16% of the student membership, down from 17.7% of membership voting in the 2019 Leadership Elections. This drop in voter turnout can be largely attributed to the Coronavirus situation intensifying throughout the week of voting.  There were 3 candidates for President, 1 for VP Education and 5 for VP Student Activities. The Full Time Officer team for 2020-21 will be Meg Price for President, Harry South for VP Education and Tish Manning for VP Student Activities.  HL thanked Val Yates, the University’s Director of Access and Inclusion for once again acting as the Deputy Returning Officer for these elections, as well as all the SU Staff involved in the elections to ensure they were visible and do the best during this difficult time. |
|  | **NUS Conference** |
|  | **13.1 Conference Overview**  HL explained that due to the circumstances, the delegates, HL, MP and SK would no longer be travelling to Liverpool for this conference and it is to be held virtually with delegates ‘attending’ remotely instead.  THB displayed on the screen the document that delegates had been sent, outlining the details of how this online Conference will work, noting that it will be largely scaled down from the initial plans.  There will be a presidential address from the National President followed by elections speeches from candidates running for national roles.  **13.2 Policies**  THB reminded Council the 8 policies for discussion at Conference had been circulated with council.  SW ran through a summary and explanation of each of the eight policies to be discussed at the Conference.  JG questioned if international students should be working more than 20 hours per week, as it is recommended to all students including home to work no more than this amount. MP explained that international students would still fall under specific University policies around part time work. THB explained further that this policy to be discussed at Conference is to enable NUS to lobby for change to national legislation to change visa restrictions.  HL also noted that Meg, Samuel and himself will be watching a video-debate around these policies, before they make their final decisions on how to vote on these policies to represent the best interests of students at Worcester.  **13.3 Elections**  HL explained there are 2 roles that the SU is eligible to vote for – National President and Higher Education President, with the information on candidates circulated to council prior to this meeting.  HL explained voting has not yet closed and delegates are open to discussion and thoughts from Council on their opinions of who they would like delegates to vote for to represent the Worcester student body. HL ran through his opinions, as a delegate, on the 7 candidates for National President and 4 candidates for HE President. Council were reminded that they could jointly mandate delegates to vote in a certain way. Council had a brief discussion and were in agreement on voting preferences.  HL summarised that he would bring an update to the next meeting on how the Conference runs.  **Action 02. HL to update Council at next meeting on NUS National Conference including the outcome of the national elections and the 8 policies to be discussed.** |
| Approval Items | |
|  | **Governance Review** |
|  | **14.1 Overview**  HL introduced the Governance Review, noting that Student Council has been very involved in this whole process and that the SU are looking to implement changes in the new academic year.  THB displayed the proposed Constitution on the screen for councillors, explaining that the changes the SU looked to make to the way it works through this review, required very few changes to the constitution itself. It was explained that the SU have taken this opportunity to make other proposed changes to the constitution alongside this.  The constitution is required to also be approved by the student body as a whole which can be done one of two ways – either an Annual General Meeting needing around 80 students attending, or a referendum with around 1000 students voting. As it is not possible to hold a physical meeting due to the current situation, the only option available to pass the constitution is a referendum to be held online. This will be held at the end of April. THB then ran through changes made to the Constitution since Councillors previously saw it.  **14.2 Vote on Bye Laws approval**  THB explained once the Bye Laws have been approved by Student Council they would go to the Board of Trustees for final approval. THB then ran through each Bye Law individually, giving an overview of content noting any changes made throughout the process of writing them. After each Bye Law was discussed, Council then voted on the approval of this.  Vote to approve Bye Law 1: Membership  For: 9  Against: 0  Abstain: 1  Bye Law 1 was approved by Council.  Vote to approve Bye Law 2: Elected Officers and the Trustee Board  For: 9  Against: 0  Abstain: 1  Bye Law 2 was approved by Council.  Vote to approve Bye Law 3: Elections and Referenda  For: 9  Against: 0  Abstain: 1  Bye Law 3 was approved by Council.    Vote to approve Bye Law 4: Governance, Decision Making and Academic Representation  For: 9  Against: 0  Abstain: 1  Bye Law 4 was approved by Council.  Vote to approve Bye Law 5: Student Networks  For: 9  Against: 0  Abstain: 1  Bye Law 5 was approved by Council.  THB ran through Bye Law 6 before handing over to MH to explain the amendment he had submitted, regarding adding a point 15c.  Vote to approve MH’s amendment to Bye Law 6.  For: 7  Against: 0  Abstain: 3  The amendment submitted by MH to Bye Law 6 was approved by Council.  Vote to approve Bye Law 6: Societies, Sports Clubs and Student-Led Services (in its entirety including the new amendment above)  For: 7  Against: 0  Abstain: 3  Bye Law 6 was approved by Council.  THB explained that this was a huge step forwards as all 6 Bye Laws had been approved by Council the democratic student-elected body, and they can move to the next step forwards to the Board of Trustees. SW thanked THB for his hard work and thanked all councillors for |
| Any other business | |
|  | **Any other business** |
|  | No other business. |
|  | **Date of next meeting: Tuesday 28th April, 17:15 – 19:15** |

**Matters Arising:**

**Action 01. THB to inform MP of feedback from Law course.**

**Action 02. HL to update Council at next meeting on NUS National Conference including the outcome of the National Elections and the 8 policies to be discussed.**