Student Council Minutes

# Thursday 18th October, 17:15-19:15, EE2035

**Agenda**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Welcome and introductions |
|  | Apologies |
|  | The role of Student Council and its members |
|  | Declarations of interest |
|  | Minutes of previous meeting |
|  | Matters arising |
| Approval Items | |
|  | Ratification of Annual Accounts |
|  | Ratification of Trustees |
|  | Approval of New Clubs and Societies   * The Novel Writing Society * The Physicians Associate Society * Occupational Therapy Society * WINE Investigators Society * The Polish Society * The Paramedics Society * The Estonian Society * Pitch Please Singing Society |
|  | Approval of Motions   * 2018-19\_002 – Shuttlebus Service between City Campus and St John’s Campus * 2018-19\_003 – Postgraduate Research Network |
|  | Process for co-option for remaining vacancies on Student Council |
| Reporting Items | |
|  | Update from Executive Committee |
|  | Update from the Board of Trustees |
|  | Update from AROG |
|  | Update from Education Council |
|  | Officers’ reports – questions/comments |
| Information Items | |
|  | Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) |
|  | Student Charter |
|  | Governance Review Update |
| Any other Business | |
|  | Any other business |
|  | Date of next meeting: Tuesday 13 November, 17:15 |

**Attendance**

**Councillors present:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| President (acting Chair) | Lucy Conn | LC |
| Vice President Student Activities | Harrison Jarrett | HJ |
| Mature Students’ Officer | Neal Morris | NM |
| LGBT+ Officer | James Gould | JG |
| Student Disability Officer | Kaya Tveito-Duncan | KTD |
| Welfare Officer | Christopher Wolff | CW |
| School of the Arts Representative | Emmy Khan | EK |
| School of Sport and Exercise Science Representative | Harry Lonsdale | HL |
| Worcester Business School Representative | Gianina Ratiu | GR |
| SU Sports Rep (BUCS Sports) | Chloe-May Barton | CMB |
| SU Society Rep (general interest) | Ellie Siviter | ES |
| SU Society Rep (academic) | Kayleigh-Georgie Cooper | KGC |

**Also in attendance:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Student Engagement Manager | Tim Hewes-Belton | THB |
| Finance Manager | Rob Cox | RC |
| Student Voice Assistant (minute-taking) | Jodie Stilgoe | JS |

**Apologies Received:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Vice President Education | Euan Morrison | EM |
| SU Sports Rep (non-BUCS Sports) | Olivia Clifford | OC |
| School of Nursing and Midwifery Representative | Valerie Deeley | VD |

**Not Present:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Sustainability Officer | Shannon Bolton | SB |
| BAME Officer | Hannah Barnett | HB |
|  |  |  |

**Minutes**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. | Welcome and introductions |
|  | LC welcomed everyone to the first official Student Council of the academic year.  The Chair of Student Council is an elected position but no nominations were received for this position during the Autumn Elections 2018. The position of Chair therefore remains a vacant position and students can apply for this role via co-option. LC explained that she would therefore be chairing this Student Council. |
| 2. | Apologies |
|  | Apologies were received from Euan Morrison (Vice President Education) who was in attendance at NUS’s roundtable discussion on the attainment gap at Aston University. Apologies were also received from Olivia Clifford (SU Sports Rep – Non-BUCS Representative) and Valerie Deeley (School of Nursing and Midwifery Representative). |
| 3. | The role of Student Council and its members |
|  | THB delivered a presentation which explained the role of Council. Student Council votes on policies that affect the governance of the Students’ Union. Through debating and passing policies, it creates change that enhances the student experience, sets the Union’s stance on key issues, and identifies and conducts campaigns on relevant topics. Council can make, repeal and amend bye-laws, it holds elected officers to account, and it approves new clubs and societies. It is the voice of students in the Union’s governance structure.  Councillors are advised to prepare for Student Council meetings by reading over the agenda, the minutes and any accompanying documents. Councillors are also encouraged to talk to the students that they have been elected to represent about proposals and motions that are coming to Council.  The importance of sending apologies if unable to attend a meeting was raised. In order for a meeting to be legitimate (for Councillors to be able to vote on motions), the attendance must reach quorum. If, for example, the number of apologies received means that the meeting cannot reach quorum, the meeting will be cancelled because it will not be legitimate. Quorum for Student Council is 50% + 1.  If an idea, policy, motion or an action is passed, Student Council will mandate an officer to oversee its implementation. The progress of this will be reported at the next Student Council meeting. |
| 4. | Declarations of interest |
|  | LC asked those present if there were any declarations of interest for any agenda items. LC declared that she is the policy proposer for 2018-19\_002 and would therefore be abstaining from voting on this motion. |
| 5. | Minutes of previous meeting |
|  | The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting. |
| 6. | Matters arising |
|  | |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Action 01: JS to send out Student Charter to Student Council** | Action completed | | **Action 02: JS to circulate the Poverty Commission Report with new members of Student Council following the result of the Autumn Elections** | Action completed | | **Action 03: EM to provide Council with feedback around the action from May’s Student Council: “JH to set a meeting with herself, AG and Kate Gynn (Academic and Welfare Advisor) to have a discussion around the implementation of mailboxes** | THB updated Council on EM’s behalf that due to LC’s similar plans, the SU will be implementing something similar in February 2019 alongside an online Ideas Forum. | |
| Approval Items | |
| 7. | Ratification of Annual Accounts |
|  | Councillors received an electronic copy of the financial statements of the year ending 31 July 2018 prior to the meeting.  LC introduced RC, the Finance Manager at the Students’ Union. RC explained that the SU is constituted in accordance with its constitution and is administered and managed by the Trustees. The SU produces accounts each month which are sent to the Finance Subcommittee and the Trustee Board. At the end of the financial year (July), the SU does its final accounts. Auditors then review all accounts over the last year and produce a report on their findings. This year, the SU received a clean audit. For 2017-18, the SU’s accounts performed better than budget. Largely due to a pension deficit, accounts this year showed a surplus of £20,941. RC noted that the SU aims to break even and any surplus will be put back into the student experience (representation, welfare services, social events and opportunities for student development within the Union and the wider community). The SU was therefore able to invest in various items such as an ice coffee machine, a new media entertainment system, and more non-alcoholic drinks. The SU has also invested a lot in 2018-19, for example developing a new SU website.  The Trustees agreed that the SU’s financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the trust deed. The accounts for 2017-18 were approved by the Board of Trustees.  RC asked if Councillors had any questions. No questions were asked. Councillors were then asked to vote whether they approve the SU accounts for 2017-18.  Vote to approve 2017-18 Annual Accounts:  For: 12  Against: 0  Abstain: 0  **Council approved 2017-18 Annual Accounts.** |
| 8. | Ratification of Trustees |
|  | THB explained the role of the Trustee Board: it is ultimately responsible for governing the affairs of the SU, ensuring that it is strategically and financially sustainable, and ensuring that it is meeting its charitable objectives. It ensures regulatory and legal compliance and monitors the performance of the Chief Executive and staff team. The Board delegates responsibilities to the Chief Executive, Student Council, and various Subcommittees (Finance and HR for example).  The Board consists of the 3 elected full time officers, up to 4 student trustees and up to 3 external trustees (people from outside of the SU and University with skills and expertise in certain areas e.g. finance, HR, SUs or HE).  Over the summer months, the SU recruited new trustees. An external trustee, Melanie Brittain, was recruited and she will sit on the Finance Subcommittee. Student trustees recruited were Robert Hampton (MA student) and Abigail Toon. Both student trustees will sit on the HR Subcommittee.  Councillors were asked to ratify the newly recruited trustees.  Vote to approve Trustees  For: 12  Against: 0  Abstain: 0  **Council ratified Trustees.** |
| 9. | Approval of New Clubs and Societies  9.1 The Novel Writing Society  The Novel Writing Society aims to take students through the process of both plotting and writing a novel. In their application, the Society noted that there is a Creative Writing Society already in existence at the University, but they explained that their Society is different as it concentrates on a particular style of writing.  Councillors were concerned that there might be a conflict of interest between the Novel Writing Society and the Creative Writing Society. HJ stated that the Creative Writing Society have been made aware that the Novel Writing Society have put in an application.  Vote to approve the Novel Writing Society  For: 10  Against: 2  Abstain: 0  **Council approved the Novel Writing Society.**  9.2 The Physicians Associate Society  The Physicians Associate Society will work with the SU and other organisations and societies to champion the course in Worcester. The Society would arrange socials, speakers and events including the National RCP PA event.  Councillors raised the concern that this society might be too similar to the other society applications: Occupational Therapy and Paramedic. HJ clarified that a core goal of the SU this year is to increase academic societies. Physicians Associate, OT and Paramedic Sciences are all different courses and therefore should all have different societies.  Vote to approve the Physicians Associate Society  For: 12  Against: 0  Abstain: 0  **Council approved the Physicians Associate Society.**  9.3 Occupational Therapy Society  The Occupational Therapy Society will provide support to students and will create social events for OT students to network and socialise, with the aim of creating a better bond between all cohorts. The Society will also help students academically as weekly study sessions will take place where individuals will be able to ask questions and help one another through peer learning.  Vote to approve the OT Society  For: 12  Against: 0  Abstain: 0  **Council approved the OT Society.**  9.4 WINE Investigators Society  WINE Investigators Society is for students who enjoy wine tasting and the paranormal. The Society would meet to watch horror movies, play games and share stories. The application form states that their main focus will not be around getting drunk and therefore the amount of wine will be limited. However, if someone does get drunk, the application states that the Society would ‘make sure the person gets home safe’.  Councillors raised the concern of how the Society can ensure that the person gets home safe. Councillors discussed whether this statement should be taken out of the application or whether it needs to be edited to be more specific (explaining how they will ensure someone gets home safely). Council decided to vote without amending the application.  Vote to approve the WINE Investigators Society  For: 9  Against: 3  Abstain: 0  **Council approved the WINE Investigators Society.**  9.5 The Polish Society  The Polish Society aims to promote Polish culture, history, and language, allowing non-Polish students to learn more about Poland and Polish tradition as well as offering a space for Polish students to gather, making Worcester feel even more like home. They aim to hold various events such as concerts, film projections, pub crawls, and cooking.  THB clarified that in the SU’s membership bye-laws it states that any student can join any society.  Councillors noted that the price to join this society is only £5.00 and they questioned if this price is enough for students to be able to hold all the events they have listed in their application. HJ explained that societies often have tickets at events where members will pay additional fees to attend certain events. Councillors decided to vote on whether the SU should raise the concern of the £5.00 joining fee with the Polish Society.  Vote to raise concern of £5.00 joining fee with the Society  For: 4  Against: 7  Abstain: 1  **Councillors will not raise the concern with the Polish Society.**  Vote to approve the Polish Society  For: 10  Against: 1  Abstain: 1  **Council approved the Polish Society.**   * 1. The Paramedics Society   The Paramedics Society will support students in education and their memberships, including CPD, guest speakers from a pre-hospital background. The Society will also provide a link between the professional body in which students have their medical malpractice and public liability insurance. The Society will affiliate with the College of Paramedics. HJ noted that the membership fee currently states £0.00 but it should state £1.00 as every society has to have a membership fee.  **Action 01: HJ to edit the Paramedics Society Application so that the membership fee is listed as £1.00 instead of £0.00**  Vote to approve the Paramedics Society  For: 12  Against: 0  Abstain: 0  **Council approved the Paramedics Society.**  9.7 The Estonian Society  The Estonian Society aims to bring Estonians together to celebrate events, promote Estonian culture and organise activities.  Councillors raised the concern of inclusivity in that the application does not mention that any student can join the society as it implies that the society is for Estonian students.  Councillors decided to vote whether the SU should raise the concern of inclusivity with the Estonian Society.  Vote to raise concerns of inclusivity with the Estonian Society  For: 11  Against: 1  Abstain: 0  **Action 02: HJ to raise the concern of inclusivity within the application form with the Estonian Society**  Councillors also noted that the application form stated that the Estonian Society would be affiliated with the Dream Foundation organisation (EST). Councillors discussed the purpose of this affiliation and decided to vote on whether Council should find out why they are affiliated with an organisation.  Vote to find out why the Estonian Society is affiliated with the Dream Foundation Organisation  For: 8  Against: 4  Abstain: 0  **Action 03: HJ to find out why the Estonian Society is affiliated with the Dream Foundation Organisation and report back to Council**  Vote to approve the Estonian Society For: 9  Against: 3  Abstain: 0  **Council approved the Estonian Society**  9.8 Pitch Please Singing Society  The Pitch Please Singing Society aims to allow students to come together and sing for pleasure regardless of ability level. The Society does not aim to develop students’ singing ability but instead gives them a space to enjoy the experience of singing for fun.  Councillors raised the concern that the Society might be similar to the Music Society but HJ reiterated that the Pitch Please Singing Society is based around fun whereas the Music Society is based around learning, improving and developing.  Vote to approve the Pitch Please Singing Society  For: 12  Against: 0 Abstain: 0  **Council approved the Pitch Please Singing Society** |
| 10. | Approval of Motions   * 1. 2018-19\_002 – Shuttlebus Service between City Campus and St John’s Campus   LC, as policy proposer, introduced this motion to Council. The aim for this motion is for Student Council to lobby the University to provide a shuttlebus service between City Campus and St John’s Campus in the evenings when lectures are scheduled (some students’ lectures run until 21:15). Following the cuts to the bus service, there is currently no scheduled bus service that runs in the evenings and so students are left with little choice as to how they can travel across the city. Therefore, the motion proposes to lobby the University to make a shuttlebus available for students in the evenings between campuses. This does not need to be a free service but should be cheap enough to be a viable option for students.  After discussion, there was a consensus that Councillors felt the need to extend the shuttlebus service to include a night service as well as evening service. The original proposal of a shuttlebus was for students finishing lectures at 21.15 with no means of getting home. However, LC expressed that she is happy to amend the motion to include a later transport service as well.  Vote to amend the motion to include night transport as well as evening transport  For: 11  Against: 0  Abstain: 1  **The motion’s action statement was amended during the meeting to read “Student Council will lobby for a nightly (Monday-Friday) bus service from when the First Bus service ends until 21:15 and a service from 00:00-03:30.”**  Councillors expressed concern around the costs and practicalities of implementing a shuttlebus. LC suggested that they would either need to implement a charge or lobby the University for money to run the scheme. LC has researched other Universities e.g. Oxford Brookes where safety buses charge students £1.  NM suggested that the driver of the shuttlebus could be a part time job for a student. LC agreed; Tom Taylor will be involved in recruitment for this scheme. HL suggested that a security guard could travel in the shuttlebus with the driver to save on the costs of security training that the driver would have to undertake if there is no security presence.  Vote to approve 2018-19\_002.  For: 11  Against: 0  Abstain: 1  **Council approved motion 2018-19\_002. Motion was mandated to LC (President) and CW (Welfare Officer).**  **Action 04: LC to report back to Council on the progress of 2018-19\_002 policy.**   * 1. 2018-19\_003 – Postgraduate Research Network   This motion will enable the UOW PGR Network to affiliate to the Students’ Union, proposing that during the SU’s governance review period, it runs as a pilot project subject to bye-laws for societies. During this pilot period, the Network will be recognised as a Student Group separate to societies but will receive the benefits of being a society with the exception of being able to apply for SU grant funding.  The Network will be subject to SU bye-laws except for the following:   * It will not have to charge membership * It will not have all core committee positions * The committee member election process will not be conducted online during the pilot period   Councillors expressed concern that if not all core committee positions are needed, it might be that they will not have an inclusivity rep which is a concern for student welfare.  Vote to approve 2018-19\_003  For: 12  Against: 0  Abstain: 0  **Council approved motion 2018-19\_003. Motion was mandated to EM, policy seconder.** |
| 11. | Process for co-option for remaining vacancies on Student Council |
|  | Following the Autumn Elections, not all Council positions were filled. Therefore, in order to fill vacant positions, Council implements a co-option process for students. This process needs to be ratified by Councillors annually.  Vote to approve the co-option process for vacant positions on Council  For: 12  Against: 0  Abstain: 0  **Council approved the co-option process** |
| Reporting Items | |
| 12. | Update from Executive Committee |
|  | LC explained that the Executive Committee consists of the elected 3 Full Time Officers and the elected 8 Part Time Officers. The Executive Committee has not yet met this year because the Part Time Officers were elected last week during the Autumn Elections. LC will arrange the first Executive Committee of the academic year and will update at the next Student Council. |
| 13. | Update from the Board of Trustees |
|  | LC updated Council that the Board of Trustees met 2 weeks ago and discussed financial statements and annual accounts. Auditors were invited to the meeting to discuss reports with the group, and the Trustees approved 2017-18 accounts. Another point of discussion was the SU’s strategic plan. LC explained that the SU has a strategic 5-year plan (taking us up to 2021). The plan started in June 2016 and was updated in summer 2017 for the 2017/18 academic year to reflect emerging priorities and key objectives of the elected officer team. The SU reviewed and updated this plan again for the 2018/19 academic year to reflect the ambitions of LC, EM and HJ.  **Action 05: JS to share the SU’s strategic plan with Councillors.** |
| 14. | Update from AROG |
|  | AROG reports to Student Council and to LTSEC.  THB gave an overview of AROG (Academic Representation and Oversight Group). The Student Engagement and Representation Group (SERG) was set up in November 2017 with the purpose of reviewing the academic representation system (in line with one of EM’s manifesto goals). As part of this working group, the development of a new Academic Representation Code of Practice led to the formation of AROG.  The responsibility of AROG, as stated in the Terms of Reference, is the ‘monitoring and administering of the operation of the academic representation system.’ AROG will cement the partnership between the University and the SU within the academic representation system. The group will also oversee and analyse data obtained from the CES to create action plans that will feed into improving quality and engagement within the academic representation system.  THB noted that the Code of Practice has not been formally published as the staff structure has not been finalised yet.  **Action 06: JS to circulate the COP with Councillors once this document has been formally approved and published** |
| 15. | Update from Education Council |
|  | THB explained that this is a new element within the SU’s governance structure and members of Education Council include all Academic Society Chairs and all School Representatives. Education Council reports to Student Council.  The Council has met once this academic year and split members into three core working groups: planning change week, learning spaces (raising awareness and researching what learning spaces students want), and raising awareness of the representation system.  Any motions or actions that members propose will need to be ratified by Student Council. If a student is a member of both Education Council and Student Council, they will need to declare an interest for any motions that Education Council submits. |
| 16. | Officers’ reports – questions/comments |
|  | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | Officer | Highlights | Questions and/or comments | | LC | LC explained that she will be focusing on raising awareness of Student Council by showcasing motions on noticeboards and on the website (Ideas Forum).  During Welcome Week the SU held 2 evening events at City Campus with a total of 7 students attending. She asked Councillors for advice; what type of events would students like to see at City Campus?  **Action 07: Councillors to talk to their student demographic to find out what events they would like to see at City Campus and feed back to LC** | None | | EM | **Action 08: EM to update Councillors on NUS Zone Conference and the NUS roundtable discussion on the attainment gap at the next meeting** | None | | HJ | HJ asked for Councillor opinions on whether they find the University’s communications engaging. He tasked Councillors to investigate between now and the next meeting e.g. looking at the University’s social media posts.  **Action 09: Councillors to feed back to HJ their opinions on University communications e.g. social media content** | None | |
| Information Items | |
| 17. | Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) |
|  | THB explained that ‘sustainability’ is not limited to the environment, but it also refers to quality education, gender equality, etc. It is important that we ensure that the work we carry out as a Union is aligned with SDGs. The Union has a Sustainability Committee which oversees this. |
| 18. | Student Charter |
|  | THB explained that the Student Charter sets out the general principles of the partnership between students, the University, and the Students’ Union. It applies to all registered students of the University. Student Charters are designed to provide information for students when they are starting a course – and during the course – so they know what they can expect and what is expected of them.  Student Council reviews and approves the Charter on an annual basis. Last year’s Council made edits to the document so that it was more inclusive for postgraduate students. The Student Charter merged with the Feedback Charter and so they are now one document.  Prior to the meeting, Councillors were sent the amended Student Charter which members of the previous Student Council approved. If Councillors have any questions relating to the Charter, they were advised to contact THB. |
| 19. | Governance Review Update |
|  | THB explained that the SU is currently organising focus groups from different student demographic groups to feed into the governance review research. The SU aims to have a new governance structure in place by September 2019, and Student Council will vote on the final report. |
| Any other Business | |
| 20. | Any other business |
|  | JG updated Council that he intends to propose a motion at the next Student Council meeting. This motion will concern utilising societies at University Open Days in order to demonstrate a community presence for various minority groups such as LGBT+ or BAME students.  LC also updated members that she may not be able to attend Student Council until the new year as she is expecting to have an operation that means she will not be at work for 2 months. |
| 21. | Date of next meeting: Tuesday 13 November, 17:15 |

**Actions**

**Action 01: HJ to edit the Paramedics Society Application so that the membership fee is listed as £1.00 instead of £0.00**

**Action 02: HJ to raise the concern of inclusivity within the application form of the Estonian Society**

**Action 03: HJ to find out why the Estonian Society is affiliated with the Dream Foundation Organisation and report back to Council**

**Action 04: LC to report back to Council on the progress of 2018-19\_002 policy**

**Action 05: JS to share the SU’s strategic plan with Councillors**

**Action 06: JS to circulate the COP with Councillors once this document has been formally approved and published**

**Action 07: Councillors to talk to their student demographic to find out what events they would like to see at City Campus and feed back to LC**

**Action 08: EM to update Councillors on NUS Zone Conference and the NUS roundtable discussion on the attainment gap at the next meeting**

**Action 09: Councillors to feed back to HJ their opinions on University communications e.g. social media content**