

**Graduate Students' Association Council**  
**18/03/2019 5pm**  
**Venue: Spring Lane Building SLB/001**

Minutes

- Present: Daniel Lock (Chair)  
Sehrish Shafi (President)  
Charlotte Chamberlain (VP Academic)  
Amy Bullard (VP Wellbeing and Community)  
Kate Densley (Sports Officer)  
Neil Cox (Volunteering Officer)  
Veerle Kappen (Colleges Officer)
- In attendance: Pete Gorbett (CEO)  
Chris Bovis (Representation and Democracy Coordinator) **Minutes**
- Apologies: Sofia Sarabia (Events Officer)  
Sarah Wright (Equality Officer)  
Maha Naeem (Communities Officer)
- Absence: Killy Zhao (Faculty Rep: Social Sciences)  
Rounak Gosh (Faculty Rep: Sciences)  
Miguel Santos (Faculty Rep: Arts and Humanities)

1. Welcome
2. Apologies (as above)
3. Approval of previous minutes
  - Approved by Daniel and Charlotte
4. Matters Arising
  - Actions from the previous meeting (see action log for updates)
5. Reports
  - a. Written Reports from Officers
    - i. President (see Officer Report)
      - Question from **C** concerning Catering Strategy Group. **P** outlined the affordability, sustainability and range of catering to be key concerns of students. In the coming weeks, CSG will publish a report on the key points of revision and what changes will be made going forward.
    - ii. VP Wellbeing and Community
      - Question from **C** concerning the GSA Community Fund. **VP W&C** promised to outline projects by sending details to all Council Members.
    - iii. VP Academic
      - Question from **C** about Course Rep drop-in sessions and whether they will continue given their popularity amongst reps. **VP A** confirmed they would. **C** highlighted that it seemed stuff was absent from the reports, which **VP A** confirmed. They highlighted that the report structure only allowed for the main points and not business as usual work. **C** suggested it be picked up as a point of discussion in item 8.
  - b. Verbal Reports
    - i. Volunteering Officer

- Volunteering Forum a few weeks back. Met with Colleges staff and others from the University. Talked about how to effectively manage volunteers and market opportunities, how to complete risk assessments and undertaking projects to support volunteering projects going forward.
- Walking service project update: it has slowed down and the University has been looking at it. March 14th there was a travel and transport focus group and how first bus run transport around transport at the university. Survey also.

**[ACTION: VP W&C TO LIAISE WITH ESTATE SERVICES TO DETERMINE DATE OF PUBLICATION OR GENERAL RELEASE OF INFORMATION]**

- In addition, Volunteering List has 55 responses. The list is growing and opportunities are being distributed. Many are recurring opportunities. Contact Volunteering with any opportunities. Amy offers to cc VO into emails about opportunities so VO is kept in the loop.

ii. Sports Officer

- Working with YUSU Sports Officer to develop inclusivity sports policy for YUSU sport and college sport to ensure all is open regardless of gender identification.
- Mental Health Sports Day in May. 22 acres can be used, but needs to be booked. Turnout concern because of exams. To coincide in Mental Health Awareness Week. Week 6 so common assessment period. Date to be decided, by 13th May.
- Questions raised by by **VP A, CEO, VP WC** and others on the best time to host. Sunday afternoon considered to be a good idea (19th May), but dependent on availability of space. **SO** to work with **VP WC** and **Communication and Events Coordinator** and report back.
- **SO** also finalising survey questions about PG participation in sport. Review of sport space being considered for next term.
- **EO** and **SO** to work on a postgraduate ball for the summer.

iii. Colleges Officer

- Met with all the Colleges and liaised with appropriate people. Highlighted what she wanted to do in role and communicated with Langwith, Halifax and Vanbrugh about how to support PGs going forward.
- Is organising a meeting of all AHOC to discuss best changes.

6. Election Incentives (see attached papers)

**VP WC:** outlined how money was donated to charity after voting during the elections. **VP WC** has asked the Vice-Chancellor whether the GSA can also offer the incentive for charity donations. **VP WC** concerned that it looks like bribing, so wants to get the opinions of Council.

**ColOff** voted in YUSU elections because of incentives. **SO** argued that only outcomes are positive. **P** raises questions of which charity. **VP WC** states that it's the asylum fund the university has for students. Says that it's important to ensure that the money benefits postgrads too. From Sept the fund should be supporting MA students.

**VP A** offers the possibility to have an opt-out box to allow people to opt out of the donation. **CEO** to add this to the election platform.

**CEO** raises that Scholarship is aimed at UG only atm. **VP WC** said that she was told by the uni, but will follow-up. **VP A** said that it could be discussed again at the next meeting.

**C** raises concern that people might just vote for the first candidate to rush through to vote for charity.

**[ACTION: CEO TO LOOK AT THE PLATFORM TO SEE IF PEOPLE CAN OPT OUT. VP WC TO CHECK THE AMOUNT OF MONEY AND TO SEE IF MA STUDENTS BENEFIT.]**

**CEO** says that some unis offer vouchers and prizes. **VO** and **SO** suggest that it's about self-interest. General idea to reject that. **VP A** wants it recorded that **VP WC** is thanked for her work on achieving this.

## 7. Council Support Provision

**CEO** asks about what level of support from the GSA. Flags the support varies between Council Officers. Some meet ad hoc, some get monthly meetings, some get support from staff only or only officers. Wants an understanding of what they want as a minimum standard.

**C** is happy with contact he's had, especially with the Representation and Democracy Coordinator. **SO** is happy with ad hoc meetings, and is glad the GSA has been available. **VO** and **ColOff** prefer ad hoc when they need support and are happy. **VP A** wants to flag that mandated meetings could cause stress and add to an already heavy workload.

**CEO** raises the possibility of improving attendance at Council. **C** flags the idea that apologies should be sent, and suggests changes so that officers can be removed from their roles if they don't attend or send apologies for two meetings in a row. **VP A** raises Faculty Rep difference as they can't be fired. **VP A** to revise how faculty reps role descriptions for future intakes.

**C** reiterates the importance of people being held accountable for not sending in apologies.

## 8. Officer Report Consultation

**VP A** requests feedback about current officer reports. **SO** would like a little summary in the Council meeting. (5 mins).

Agreed: Page Limit to be 4 pages with last page about general business and committee stuff.

Possibility of informing Council about what meetings Sabbs sit on. List of Committees to be added to the Council Drive alongside Job Descriptions.

**CEO** flagged issue of style and standard of report. A set template? **C** requests the template to be used going forward for consistency and accessibility.

Discussion surrounding how best to advise them regarding reports. **ColOff** to request glossary. **VO** wants an abstract. Disagreement on abstract as **C** wants proper scrutiny as may indicate that the whole report isn't being read to hold the sabbs to account.

**C** suggests the possibility of a fourth page to highlight bullet points of things not discussed.

Some training or information about scrutiny requested as Council feel unsure on what areas to focus on.

#### 9. AOB

Video elections for committee (since postponed)

Elections committee looking for volunteers

Elections chat - come see a sabbatical officer or staff member

Question raised about visas for EU citizens in relation to sabbatical officer roles.

**CEO** states that it's unclear at the moment but as soon as the information is available people will be updated. He highlights, however, that there is unlikely to be a significant change as International Students can hold the posts.

VO raised the possibility of facebook account. Maybe set up a group for volunteering and make VO a moderator and volunteering group.

**CEO** suggests liaising with **Events and Communication Coordinator** to find a solution.

Meeting Closed