

**University of St Andrews' Students' Association**  
**Meeting of the**  
**Student Representative Council**  
**Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2008, Committee Room, 7:30pm**  
**Minutes**

**Present**

Andrew Keenan	Association President
James Shield	Director of Representation (DoR)
Stacy Lee	Director of Events and Services (DoES)
Tom Cahn	Association Chair
Phil Pass	SRC Accommodation Officer
Andrew MacKenzie	SRC Education Officer
Meredith Wouters	SRC Equal Opportunities and Welfare Officer
Matthew Guest	Association Community Relations Officer
Sarah McCusker	Association Sustainability Officer
Sarah Lloyd-Thomas	Arts/Divinity Senate Representative
Eddie Walsingham	Science/Medical Senate Representative
Kat Stevens	SRC Member for University Accommodation
Emma Foley	SRC Member for Private Accommodation
Christopher Dickie	SRC Member from First Year
Kyle Mitchell	SRC Member for Sub-Honours Academic Issues
Mel Nethercott	SRC Member for Honours Academic Issues
Bradshaw Hawkins	SRC Member for International Students
Hatty Sahlsberg	SRC Member for Students with Disabilities
Lukas Ross	SRC Member for Ethnic Minorities
Libby Parker	SRC Member for Widening Access
Laura Wilkes	SRC Member for the Faculty of Arts
Kathryn Garcin	SRC Member for Part Time Students
Beverly Macklin	SRC Member for Mature Students
Molly Uzzell	SRC Member for Women's Issues
Benjamin Bridgman	SRC Member for Sexualities and Gender
Martin Schmierer	SRC Member Without Portfolio
Hari Kumar	John Burnet Hall Representative
Rachael Sparrow	Albany Park Representative

**Apologies**

Philippa Dunn	Director of Student Development & Activities (DoSDA)
Daniel Fisher	SRC Member for Science Faculty

**Absent**

Ashley Cole	Postgraduate Senate Representative
Marcus Mayo	SRC Member for Divinity Faculty
Marc Locherty	SRC Member for Medicine Faculty
Scott Platton	SRC Member for Men's Issues
Terry Fulton	SRC Member for Postgraduate Accommodation

**1.0 Adoption of Agenda**

Agenda adopted

**2.0 Chair's Business**

**2.1 Apologies for Absence**

As above

**2.2 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

Accepted

**2.3 Matters Arising**

None

**2.4 Minutes on website**

There have been some difficulties with this, as well as issues with the email list; if members have not been receiving emails they should see the Chair at the end.

### **3.0 Presidential Business**

#### **3.1** *President*

##### **3.1.1** Motion regarding Association Bylaws

The President has collated all of the changes made in the last two years; these have already been passed by the SRC/SSC but final approval is needed to make them official.

The motion was passed unanimously.

### **4.0 Representation Business**

#### **4.1** *Director of Representation*

##### **4.1.1** Accommodation: The university over-admitted this year leading to problems with finding accommodation for new students. The DoR has spent much time helping affected new students find private accommodation.

##### **4.1.2** Elections: The end of week three will be dedicated to postgraduate elections in the hope that a separate event will increase PG participation. The University Court is running the election of the new Rector; the DoR can help with contact details if students wish to ask a potential candidate to stand. It is important that candidates understand their responsibilities as rector; information can be found at [www.yourunion.net/rector](http://www.yourunion.net/rector). Nominations close on 24<sup>th</sup> October and the election will be held on 31<sup>st</sup> October.

##### **4.1.3** Other business: The Association now has an employment rights guide for the first time, and the green guide is also nearly finished. The Chair asked about the progress of the guide for SRC members; the President has been editing it but it is not yet finished. The Chair offered a guide to creating motions for any members who wanted it. CHESS has a new website ([www.chessonline.org.uk](http://www.chessonline.org.uk)), the rector's group has had its first meeting and information posters about the current sabbaticals have been put up in the Association (SRC posters will be forthcoming).

### **5.0 Services Business**

#### **5.1** *Director of Events and Services*

##### **5.1.1** Orientation Week: The week went well, with no major issues beyond a booked band not showing on Saturday night. Takings were slightly down on last year.

##### **5.1.2** Future events include a stock market promotion at the bar on Thursday and a MusFund-run ska night on Saturday.

### **6.0 Activities Business**

#### **6.1** Absent

### **7.0 Officers' Business**

#### **7.1** *Accommodation Officer*

##### **7.1.1** The guide for Senior Students is nearly ready for distribution.

##### **7.1.2** The How to Rent survey is currently being organised but for legal reasons care has to be taken with phrasing questions and distributing results.

##### **7.1.3** Students at DRA are currently being charged a £30 'let in fee' when they lock themselves out of their rooms; this is being investigated and challenged by the committee.

##### **7.1.4** When asked how the committee was reacting to the university's redefinition of 'affordable accommodation', the officer said it would be decided at the next meeting. People are welcome to attend or to email him.

##### **7.1.5** When asked what solutions had been found regarding the new students struggling to find accommodation, the DoR answered that nearly everyone who came to St Andrews now has accommodation. However, figures should be available next week showing how many people deferred or dropped out because of the problems.

##### **7.1.6** When asked if the Association was going to release a statement about the problems, the DoR answered that he had already spoken to The Courier. The President answered that the Association was going to give an oral (and possibly written) presentation to the University Court.

##### **7.1.7** When asked what the repercussions would be in future years, the DoR answered that the higher numbers would affect everything, from the number of tutors hired to the organisation of graduation. An additional problem is that although people now have accommodation it is for some of them very expensive, and as such there will be extra strain on the hardship fund.

**7.1.8** When asked what had caused such an over-admittance, the President answered that the university had given around the same number of offers as the year before, but acceptance had risen by 20%. The university argues that all such institutions have faced the same problem this year; the Association argues that acceptance rates have been rising year on year, and with the university's growing public profile and accommodation limitations it should not have risked the number of offers it was making. The university has promised not to make the same mistake again, although from this year the university is not penalised for over-admittance.

**7.2** *Education Officer*

**7.2.1** Class representatives: The class rep guide has been redone and is ready for distribution. Around 200 emails were collected at the Societies' Fair from people interesting in being reps. There will be three training sessions for those selected in coming Wednesday/Saturday sessions.

**7.2.2** Second hand book sale: The book sale is being held again this semester. Books can be dropped off at the library next week and the sale will be held on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> in the Committee Room. If anyone would like to volunteer to help please get in touch.

**7.2.3** Library: The new short loan system came up in the committee meeting; Jon Purcell has volunteered to come to the next meeting to discuss the changes if required. These were due to a cut in the operational budget, which meant either a cut in staffing the short loan section or a reduction in opening hours. The library is however trying to get extra funding because of the increased number of students, and the book budget has increased meaning extra money has become available to purchase short loan recommendations. When asked whether there was any truth in the rumour that placing books in short loan was now decided by library staff members the officer answered that academics still had control over what went into short loan, but the system was monitored by the library.

**7.2.4** Book buying: On being asked what was fair in terms of students being told to buy books by lecturers, the officer answered that students are expected to buy some books but it is not fair when students are told to buy books that are non-essential. Several students had had this experience; the Chair mentioned that the Association's 1996 guide listed information on each module offered by the university, including which books really were essential and which would never be used. The President and officer have looked into this but would have to be careful about public criticism. The Arts/Divinity Senate Representative suggested that as first years are often keen to get started they should be emailed essential booklists before arriving at St Andrews. This would give them the option of finding cheaper books online. The officer said that there had been improvements in getting books lists out early but there was still work to be done. It was mentioned that books can be acquired through the Inter-Library Loans service, but this can be expensive and time-consuming.

**7.3** *Equal Opportunities and Welfare Officer*

**7.3.1** Lots of condoms were distributed during Orientation Week. Events for foreign, mature, postgraduate, etc. students will be held in the coming weeks.

**7.4** *Association Community Relations Officer*

**7.4.1** The officer said that as the committee is new this year he is looking forward to developing its work and helping other committees and councils. His new email is [community.relations@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:community.relations@st-andrews.ac.uk).

**7.4.2** Orientation Week: The welcome ceilidh organised with Flora Selwyn was attended by around 250 new students and there are plans for this to be an annual event. The Taste of St Andrews event with local businesses offering freebies needs more work, but Zest were excellent.

**7.4.3** Community Council: The chair of the Community Council has put out a letter asking for new members, and as the letter states that permanent residents are preferred the officer is keen to have more students stand to represent the student population of the town. For more information see the officer.

**7.5** *Association Sustainability Officer*

**7.5.1** The officer urged people to come to the first meeting.

**8.0** **Sabbatical Question Time**

**8.1** It was asked when members elected last October stop serving; their term finishes on 31<sup>st</sup> October.

**8.2** The President was asked whether there was any truth to the rumour that the Association's change to a 'charitable company limited by guarantee' was causing

problems with booking events on Association property. The President explained that it was a purely legal move and an ongoing process which had been begun a long time ago. The change will make the company liable rather than the employees and students who sit on the Board. It will also mean certain services can be offered to non-members, but it does not affect prices or bookings.

**8.3** The DoR gave advance notice of a motion he intends to bring regarding the financial responsibility of events held on university property. He also noted that the university intends a complete review of its marking and classification system and is looking for large amounts of input from students.

**9.0 Officers' Question Time**

**9.1** None

**10.0 Notices**

**10.1** Next Meeting of the SRC:  
Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> October, 7:30pm, provisionally in the Committee Room  
Possibly joint meeting with Student Support forum

**10.2** Next Meetings of Sub-Committees:  
Accommodation: Wednesday, 10am, Committee Room  
Education: Monday, 1pm, Committee Room  
Equal Opportunities and Welfare: Thursday, 4pm  
Community Relations: Monday, 2pm, Committee Room  
Environment and Ethics: Monday, 4pm

**11.0 AOCB**

None

**12.0 Close of Meeting**