

## SRC Minutes 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2009

Present:

Director of Representation	Georgina Rannard
Director of Student Development and Activities	Matthew Guest
Association Chair	Emma Foley
Association Sustainability Officer	Benjamin Bridgman
Association Community Relations Officer	Holly West
Association External Campaign Officer	Nick Roxburgh
SRC Equal Opportunities and Welfare Officer	Libby Parker
SRC Education Officer	Luke Woollen
SRC Member for Sexualities and Gender	Miranda Myrberg
SRC Member for Widening Access	Fiona Kingston
SRC Member for International Students	Hervé Lemahieu
SRC Member for Library and Learning Resources	Alex Bennett
SRC Member for Sub-honours Academic Issues	Joely Denkinger
SRC Member for Private Accommodation	Alastair Holmes
SRC Member for Mature Students	Brittany Dunstan
SRC Member for University Accommodation	John Skelton
SRC Member for Students with Disabilities	Beverly Macklin
SRC Member for Honours Academic Issues	Kit Garcin
Arts/Divinity Senate Representative	Lukas Ross
Rector's Assessor	James Shield
The Rector	Kevin Dunion

The Rector addressed the SRC to inform them what he had done over the past year. He said that he had spent more than the day a week he had intended to work on students' issues, which shows how relevant the role is. He thanked Georgina and James for their hard work. Accommodation remains a prominent issue that concerns students. There are also concerns with regards to academic misconduct, in particular the issue of students not understanding the process, or even being told what they are accused of. The Rector meets with the Principal regularly as part of his role as the Chair of University Court. He also meets with Chris Lusk and the Proctor monthly to discuss issues such as the library and postgraduates concerns. He also noted that the Class Rep forums have been very successful. He mentioned that he was also involved with "fun things" such as On The Rocks and the Half-Cut Film Festival.

The Arts/Divinity Senate Representative asked the Rector what position he had held on the SRC when he was a student.

The Rector replied that he was the SRC Member for First Years but he couldn't remember the other positions he held.

The Rector asked the SRC what issues they felt were currently prominent.

SRC Member for Library and Learning Resources said that the university policy on class libraries was worrying.

The Rector said that he would bring the concerns of class reps and students regarding the library to the Schools or the Proctor.

The DoR said that the University's rationale for closing school libraries was that since they are spending so much on the main library, they should ensure that the books are accessible to all students.

The SRC Member for Sub-Honours Academic Issues asked whether the library would remain open during the redevelopment or what the disruption would be.

The Rector answered that the library wouldn't be closed but that the University should be asked whether the class libraries would be kept open.

The SRC Member for Widening Access said that with the 600<sup>th</sup> Anniversary approaching, the University will be putting money aside for scholarships and that students should have a say in how the money is allocated. Currently there are a lot of conditions attached to receiving scholarships; perhaps there is a better way to allocate funding.

The Rector said that this will be important in the future as the Principal is hoping to raise a lot of money for widening access initiatives so the University will have to decide what programmes it pays for and which students it can help.

The SRC Member for Widening Access asked how information is collated on which students are being passed over.

The Rector said that this issue is important to the Principal and discussion on this will be ongoing. He told the SRC they could email him to organise a meeting.

## 1. Adoption of the Agenda

## 2. Chair's Business

2.1 Apologies for Absence- Phil Pass; Kat Stevens and Andrew Keenan.

2.2 Minutes of the previous meeting

2.3 Matters arising – some Members have been unable to open documents.

## 3. Presidential Business

The DoR presented the President's business in his absence.

The University has promised the Association funding for the redevelopment - £2.5million in 2010/2011 rising to £10.5million over the next few years. Thanks to past and present Sabbaticals for working for this.

The SRC Member for Sexualities and Gender asked if this money would fund a new Sabbatical position.

The DoR answered that the money was for building work only and that there would be another round of consultation on the internal plans. The promise of the money means that planning can now be more thorough. There will hopefully be workshops to include students' ideas.

The SRC Member for International Students asked if there were conditions attached to the grant.

The DoSDA said that the money is specified for building work and that people will probably be given several plans to choose from.

The DoR reiterated that the money was for the building and not for the organisation.

The Rector's Assessor asked where the Association will get the rest of the money.

The DoR answered that she was unsure why this specific sum had been granted but that the Association has some money to contribute.

The Postgraduate elections will be this Thursday (5<sup>th</sup> November). All the positions are contested and any volunteers would be appreciated.

The SRC Member for Library Resources and Learning said that he was available to help.

#### 4. Representation Business

The class rep forum went well. Issues arising include the problem of not being able to take more than the usual amount of credits, although individual students can consult their faculty's Dean about this and the relatively few contact hours for Arts Honours students.

The University is considering changing the Permission to Proceed system as it currently fails to deter some students from attending classes or handing in assignments. Often students only realise they have lost PtP when it is too late for them to do anything about it. The new system of Academic Alerts should make students aware that action may be taken against them early enough to change their behaviour.

The SRC Member for Widening Access asked whether this had an impact on the new immigration laws (regarding overseas students).

The SRC Member for International Students said that reduced contact points for international students so won't be too much of an issue.

The EOW Officer noted that the current system fails students so there is a need for change, although the alert system seems complicated.

The DoR said that the new system will be much the same as the current one, except students will be notified earlier that they may lose their PtP.

The EOW Officer suggested that some tutors did not keep attendance properly so the problem of students missing classes may remain.

The DoR replied that the University could not issue Academic Alerts retrospectively.

The SRC Member for Widening Access asked if students would still be required to submit absence certificates.

The EOW Officer confirmed that this will be the case.

The SRC Member for Library and Learning Resources asked when this would come into effect.

The DoR answered that it would start in September [2010].

The DoR said that she would send the paper regarding the Academic Alert system to the SRC and that they could email her with any suggestions.

The Rector's Assessor pointed out the need for tutors to be more vigilant regarding their students' progress if this system came into force.

The DoR responded that this would be ensured by a "higher power" which would be better. The new system has not yet been approved and that she would report any amendments to the SRC.

The DoR also needs to plan for after Reading Week, so if anyone needs help for events can they let her know.

The Principal has asked that the SRC clean up after the Foam Fight. If anyone can't do this can they email the DoR.

The second hand bike sale will take place tomorrow (4<sup>th</sup> November) in the car park.

#### 5. Events & services business

The DoSDA presented the DoES' business as he was absent.

Calvin Harris went well. The DoSDA is taking on some of the events and services business while the DoES convalesces. He is working on the Bop, but will not be allowed to play his music.

#### 6. Student development and activities business

The DoSDA attended the Aim University Learning At Work conference in Glasgow. It may be possible for students doing non-vocational degrees to take on internships as part of their degree.

Societies have mostly received their cheques.

The DoSDA has attended many meetings, filled in for Phil and has been further looking into Charity Law.

The SRC Member for Library and Learning Resources asked whether undergraduate research projects could count as extra credit.

The DoSDA said that this could be linked as an extra-curricular activity but that this particular scheme was between institutes.

The DoR said that this embeds skills that may be useful later in a student's career.

The EOW Officer enquired who checks Venue 1 at the end of the night.

The DoSDA answered that it is the porters or door staff.

The SRC Member for Private Accommodation asked the DoSDA about the conference he attended on student radio and the relaunch of STAR.

The DoSDA told the SRC that STAR had stopped broadcasting in order to train members and sort out their technological problems. They are still producing podcasts. The STAR committee agreed to do this.

The SRC Member for Private Accommodation asked if their sponsorship by KPMG had been affected by this.

The DoSDA replied that he didn't think so, but that the funding would come into effect next semester, so it would be made clear then.

The SRC Member for Library and Learning Resources asked if the Alternative G20 Summit on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> November, at 1:30pm would be affected by the DoES' absence.

The DoSDA said that this was the Building Supervisor's responsibility, not the DoES or the DoSDA's.

The DoR said that the Association was not organising the event, just hosting it. Anyone can sign up on the Put People First website. The Rector is speaking at it.

The Rector said that there would be good speakers and students are very welcome as there will be Q&A sessions. He will be hosting and chairing the first part of the meeting.

The SRC Member for International Students asked how many people would be attending.

The Rector replied that People and Planet would be holding training there and others would bring their membership.

The SRC Member for International Students asked if it would be a nationally broadcasted event.

The Rector said it wouldn't be televised but there would be a publicity stunt on West Sands.

The Rector's Assessor asked if STAR were involved with the iTunes project and if they wanted to be they should contact the Dean of Science.

The DoSDA said he would look into it.

The EOW Officer asked if there had been any development from the schools regarding the recording of lectures.

The Rector's Assessor said that the project was mainly about creating an electronic prospective and perhaps later on academics can choose to be recorded and put it online, but not now.

## 7. Sabbatical Question Time

### 8. Officers' business

#### 8.1 SRC Accommodation Officer

#### 8.2 SRC Education Officer

The class reps have brought a petition about the lack of contact hours for students at honours level – they want 3 instead of 2. Hopefully the petition will go online so that it will be more accessible.

The DoR asked the SRC if they wanted to back this.

The Arts/ Divinity Senate Representative said that this was an issue students felt strongly about and that it is necessary to carry out independent research.

The EOW Officer wondered what the extra hour would be used for.

The Education Officer said that that would be up to the schools to decide.

The SRC Member for Widening Access said that it might be useful to have an extra hour for feedback instead of classes.

The SRC Member for Sexualities and Gender said that different subjects had different needs.

The Education Officer said that the survey would ask what the students wanted the extra hour for, as well as what subject the responder studies and at what level. There will be further consultation on this.

The DoR noted that there was diverse opinion on this topic. She also said that she was unsure what would be on this survey. The Association could facilitate the survey without running it. She asked if the Association should put the survey on its website or just represent the petitioners to the University.

The Rector's Assessor said that it would be easy to host the survey on the website and that the comment box would be useful.

The SRC Member for International Students said that the SRC could simply call for an extra hour of class time and leave it up to schools to decide how best to use it.

The Rector's Assessor said that it would be useful for schools if we find out what students want and collate the details.

The Education Officer is also looking at what students want from tutorials so that they can be improved. He is also looking at getting internships and scholarships can be made available to students to help them with their careers. Internships can be expensive so it must be ensured that all students can afford to do them.

The EOW Officer said that her committee was also working on a similar issue and enquired what the Education Officer had done so far.

The Education Officer said that he had only begun work on this matter the previous week but would like to establish links with American universities and he wants to meet the Principal about it.

The EOW Officer said that this depended on schools which may not support it. The SRC Member for Widening Access asked the Education Officer to include the EOW committee in any meeting that he had with the Principal regarding scholarships as this was something they are working on as well.

### 8.3 SRC Equal Opportunities and Welfare Officer

The Committee has been busy. The gender workshop was successful.

The SRC Member for Sexualities and Gender said that there were people from different schools and some staff members there and that they received good feedback. The next workshop is scheduled for the 24<sup>th</sup> November, 5-7pm. She met with Rob Warren to discuss academia and gender issues and will meet Chris Lusk on Thursday too.

The surveys will be going online soon.

The SRC Member for Mature Students said that there is one to ask part-time and mature students about what issues they face and suggestions they have which will be published tomorrow.

There was a Disability Awareness Group meeting.

The SRC Member for International Students is working with the Sustainability Society about the holiday system and is hoping to have more surveys.

They are also helping Nightline with advertisement and also scholarships; they have met with Andrew Day and are meeting again in two weeks about an academic review committee to do with scholarships and to make sure that the EOW committee have some input. Accommodation and returning students are big issues with regards to this.

The DoR said that condom distribution has become an issue as NHS Fife wants to cancel the free condom programme as they view it as a waste of resources. She hopes to have a meeting with their representative to prevent this from happening as it would be a serious problem.

The SRC Member for Sub-Honours Academic Issues suggested that the Association convince them of the future costs of sexual health problems that may result from the lack of free condoms.

The DoR said that NHS Fife claim that this is a government issue.

The SRC Member for Library and Learning Resources asked if the Association could buy condoms and still give them out.

The DoR said that they probably could – she will meet with the NHS and if they cancel the programmes then she will discuss the alternatives with them and the Association

#### 8.4 Association Community Relations Officer

The Community Council the previous night was mainly about the recent flooding and they hope to do something about the Kinnessburn. She has sent 7000 postcards out to ask residents about ideas to improve Town/Gown relations with “In Focus” magazine. She will hold a bike lights meeting with the police on Thursday to see about that.

#### 8.5 Association Sustainability Officer

He held a meeting today which included people from the St Andrews Re-Use Group which recycles waste in St Andrews. He is considering applying to the Scottish Climate Challenge to fund internships dealing with recycling.

The DoR suggested asking Estates for funding. She also mentioned that the funding would only be for three years.

The Sustainability Officer mentioned that St Andrews Re-Use were all fourth years who would possibly like to work alongside the Union to encourage recycling.

As the EOW Officer mentioned earlier, semester dates is an issue. Estates is also carrying out a survey about this. It is important that a majority of students are in favour of changing semester dates before pushing for change.

The DoR said that there had been some movement from the University about this; they are not necessarily against change.

The Inter-Hall Energy Competition has started although there has been little campaigning so far.

The Chair suggested that the Sustainability Officer email the Accommodation Officer to encourage Senior Students to publicise the competition.

The EOW Officer asked who made the publicity.

The DoR said that Oli Walker does it if help is needed.

The Fairtrade Policy needs to be renewed as it hasn't been in several years. There is nothing new in it. If it is not renewed then the University risks losing its Fairtrade status.

The Arts/Divinity Senate Representative said that the policy needs to be enforced and that people must be made aware of the policy.

The DoR stated that regarding Point 3, the Association could not make The Saint include anything in their content.

The Education Officer asked what Fairtrade do.

The DoR explained the purpose of the Fairtrade Foundation.

The Education Officer asked if Fairtrade products were more expensive than others.

The DoR said that price increases were down to individual shops.

The Education Officer questioned the premise of Fairtrade and stated that he disagreed with the foundation.

The EOW Officer said that since the Association was already a Fairtrade organisation that the SRC couldn't change it.

The Officer for External Campaigns said with regards to Point 4, that a

Steering Group had not met in several years and asked if the SRC could nominate a convenor to do this.

The DoR said that the Steering Group has met but that it is not a separate committee.

The Sustainability Officer said that if the Policy was passed that he would make an action plan and enforce this in future.

The DoR agreed that an action plan would be useful for enforcement.

Vote: 17 for, 1 against, 0 abstentions.

The Fairtrade Policy was approved.

#### 9. Officer question time

#### 10. Any other business

The Community Relations Officer asked if the SRC Agenda could be displayed downstairs to make people aware of what will be discussed.

The Chair agreed that this was possible but the Agenda contains little information that changes from each meeting so it might not be very useful.

The DoR asked the SRC to send any suggestions to her. She also asked the SRC to send her photos for a poster to be put in the lobby, or else she would take them from Facebook.

#### 11. Notices

11.1 Next meeting of the SRC - 24<sup>th</sup> November

Meetings of the sub-committees:

Education - Friday at 1pm

EOW - Week 8, Monday at 4pm, SSS speaking.

Community Relations - after Reading Week

Sustainability - Tuesday after Reading Week at 4pm(ish)