

STUDENTS' COUNCIL (SRC) PAISLEY

Video Conference with Paisley, Ayr and Hamilton

Thursday 19th April, 12.30pm, P121

In the Chair, Cara Lee, Depute President Education and Welfare

Minutes

The Chair opened the Paisley section of the meeting by outlining the proposed video conferencing protocol for information and agreement by the members. This was accepted unanimously.

1. Sederunt

Paisley

Cara Lee	Depute President Education and Welfare (DPEW)
Alastair Adamson	Sports President (SP)
Stuart McCabe	Ordinary Trustee Paisley
Scott Winchester	Ordinary Trustee Paisley
Jack Douglas	BA Social Science/LGBT STAR group convener
Heather Armstrong	BA Social Science
Rachel Boyd	BA Social Science
Leanne Burke	BA Social Science
Tommy Reid	BA Social Science
Siobhan Wilson	Mental Health Nursing/Netball 2 nd (Hamilton)

In attendance

Caroline Sharp	General Manager
Andrew Taylor	Welfare, Campaigns and Activities Co-ordinator (WCA Co-ord)

Video Conference

Hamilton

Sam Phillips	Campus President Hamilton (CPH)
Garry Quigley	President
Thomas McLaren	Computer Networking
Frazer McChlery	BSc Motorsports design/Motorsports society
Jade McCarroll	BA Social Science
Conor Jackson	BA Social Studies
Kate Shearer	BA Social Science
Kirsty McKeowan	BA Journalism
Isla Todd	BA Journalism
Louise Reilly	BA Journalism
Alan Reid	Multi-Media Technology/Christian Union (Paisley)

In attendance

Claire Lumsden	Student Representation Co-ordinator (SR Co-ord)
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Ayr

Daniel Copithorn Campus President Ayr (CPA)

In attendance

Heather Weir General Assistant

2. Acceptance of Apologies

Scott Winchester, Ordinary Trustee Paisley for late arrival

Alastair Adamson, Sports President and Siobahn Wilson, for early departure (1.20pm)

3. Acceptance of Minutes from the previous meeting (20/03/2012)

(a) Matters arising from those minutes- None, minutes unanimously accepted.

4. Acceptance of the report of the business of the Association

DPEW highlighted the main points from the report of business and invited SP to comment on the upcoming sports ball. SP stated that uptake has been really good with 118 tickets being sold to date. The deadline for ticket sales has now passed. All sports teams will be represented, as will many of the societies, showing that we are moving in the right direction. Jack Douglas enquired as to whether the makeover of Java has been completed or if there is more to come? DPEW advised that the painting has been completed but that there will be ongoing improvements to the branding and marketing materials. The report of business was accepted.

5. Acceptance of the reports and minutes of committees- None

12.44pm Scott Winchester joined the meeting.

As the meeting was ahead of schedule, the Chair led an informal discussion of Student Association priorities for 2012-2013.

In a change to the standing orders, Item 9 of the agenda was then brought forward.

9. AOCB

DPEW asked SP how he was getting on writing his constitutional change motion and was advised that this is on hold for now with a view to being brought back to council at the start of the next academic session.

Jack Douglas enquired as to how SAUWS deals with delegates who fail to attend a conference for which they have been registered to represent us at. DPEW suggested that a motion could be brought to council proposing procedures to be followed in the event that a delegate is unable to attend a conference or event once registered. Disciplinary procedures and suitable penalties to be considered in the event that the procedure is not followed should be included.

1pm – video conference began with Ayr and Paisley Students' Councils

6 Business Introduced by Officer Bearers-

(a) Mitigation Policy review

DPEW outlines the Mitigation review, states that the University are rewriting this policy as it is unfit for purpose. Informs council that one of the ideas put forward by the University is that your mitigation form is signed off by either a personal tutor, module coordinator, member of the student services, member of the effective learning team or one of the counselling staff rather than

supplying doctor notes. Whilst getting the form signed the idea is that the member of staff will discuss a support plan for you to help you to complete the assessment at the next possible diet. This support would come in a learning agreement format and would be agreed by both the staff member and the student.

CPA suggests there could be a risk of students going from person to person until someone agrees to sign off the form, also asks what would happen if staff didn't agree to the Mitigation, President agrees stating that the system could be open to abuse and what happens if the lecturer doesn't like the student, DPEW suggests the lecturer doesn't really have a choice as it is essentially a self-certification process however with additional support. CPH comments that the effectiveness of the policy can be debatable with the current Personal Tutor system as they currently are not fulfilling their role without this additional requirement, DPEW suggests it does not necessarily need to be a personal tutor, it can be a staff member from the Student Services. SP expresses concern that some staff won't want to be involved with mitigation and Kate Shearer also has concerns about personal issues that student may not want to discuss with someone they don't know, DPEW states that Student Services have raised this and suggest that if an issue is ongoing there could be a separate route for this.

President suggests he would be interested in knowing what the equality impact of this policy would be particularly with regards to disability needs as it could be problematic to students with support needs, suggests that the University may be better off improving the personal tutor system. DPEW informs Council that Chris Bradshaw (the University's Equality and Diversity Co-ordinator) is on the group, he and Maeve Cowper (head of Student Services) came up with this idea, reiterates that there is no policy yet just ideas. Heather Armstrong comments that if we are meant to be preparing our students for the world of work, at work there needs to be some evidence of illness or personal difficulties. Thomas Reid suggests there could be more than one policy stream, accommodating a spectrum of issues students may face. Jade McCarroll comments that perhaps Council is focusing too much on a physical illness, asks what about family/personal issues, could this work for them, DPEW suggests it may be possible to have more than one policy addressing this concern. CPH points out that this policy will increase the workload of Student Services staff and asks if the University will be employing more staff to deal with this. DPEW suggests she will raise this particular question at the next meeting of the review group.

DPEW also outlines another area of the mitigation, states that the University also noted that there was a difference in the effect that mitigation/resits have on honour students as this is the only year that marks are capped at 40% for any resit regardless of successful mitigation. Due to this they wondered if honour students should be treated slightly different so they might need to hand in extra evidence for example like a doctor's note. Siobhan Wilson suggests that Nursing programmes don't have an honours year and students need to pass most assessments first time. DPEW suggests she will take this specific concern to the review group.

DPEW thanks Council for their great questions and will take all comments and questions back to the group. Suggests that it is important to have all questions and concerns address as the policy cannot be changed half way through the year. Further comments that Malcolm Foley (Depute Principle Learning and Teaching) will sit on the Mitigation group to ensure continuity of the policy.

(b) Library fines amnesty update

DPEW outlines that a motion for this was passed at the last meeting of Ayr, Hamilton and Paisley Councils. Informs Council that a meeting has been held with Anne McGillivray (Dean of Students)

and Gordon Hunt (Head of Library Services), they agree that not being able to graduate due to fines is unfair, states that Anne McGillivray will look into how many students haven't graduated due to library fines. Also informs Council that it may not be possible to accommodate this for this year however will make it for next year.

Kate Shearer suggests there should be guidelines for this as there may be circumstances which prevent the student from handing back books and doesn't agree that library staff should be able to make decisions on who pays the fines and who doesn't. DPEW suggests that illness etc would count. DPEW informs Council that sometimes students will work at the University to pay off fines. CPH doesn't agree with this, suggests that students at Halls were asked to clean, comments that this is morally not right and the Students Association should not be supporting this. Stuart McCabe informs Council that he is a Student Guide and has worked with a student who was hired to pay off a debt, suggested the enthusiasm for the job wasn't there and a large part of the job is this. Jade McCarroll comments that if just one student is not able to graduate because of fines this is not fair and the fines amnesty should be pushed harder. President comments that he thinks the number will be low, however larger fines should be fought more, money should not be a barrier to not graduating. DPEW suggests that she and the President will have further meetings and get back to Council via email.

(c) Annual report 2011-12

President outlines that the Annual Report will be presented to University Court, the University's governing body, each year we get to say what we've done. This year's theme asks what the union means to students as there is a lot that we do that we don't always promote. President outlines the following services and achievements

- Democratic services – election turnout this year was low again, however we will be doing a review of this to ensure improvements are made for next year. Students Council has been well attended this year however Ayr campus has struggled, again this will be looked at with the view of improving engagement here.
- Representation – this year the Student Conference focused on the new Enhancement Theme 'Developing and Supporting the Curriculum', the conference was well received by all in attendance and will be reported to SEG at its next meeting. We have approximately 200 student reps and trained over 100 at introductory and intermediate level, it is hoped next year to include senior rep training.
- Campaigning
 - Fair share fair access campaign, student dropout rates for UWS are 1 in 4 drop out in the first year, we are trying to address this with greater support during this time.
 - The Feedback campaign has developed well over the year, all students are aware of their right to exam feedback, getting feedback stickers on exam tables was a great win. This will run again next year with more focus on staff responsibilities.
 - Healthy body healthy mind has made some good developments over the year, raising awareness of the benefits of recreational activities. This will run again next year.
 - The Transition team have achieved a lot this year both in the community and within the University. Well done to them.
 - Social justice undertakings, campaigned for votes at 16, equal marriage and campaigned against collage cuts and RUK fees, also campaigned to the University to improve its student retention. Raised money for Children in Need, Sports Relief and Hamilton hosted a very successful night to raise funds for Teenage Cancer Trust. LGBT group raised money for a local West of Scotland HIV/Aids Charity.

- Sports and Societies have done well this year with many more sports teams and societies running. Currently looking to increase funds for this area.
- STAR groups have also done well. We now have membership for all liberation groups (Women's, LGBT, disabled, black students), the building block are there and next year will be even more successful.
- Welfare service – our service compliments the University's well. The welfare service has been used widely this year with more students coming to see us about financial hardship issues, in particular Accommodation costs are too high and delays with SAAS payments has been the main cause of this. We don't think the University are paying attention to the plight of some students and this will be pushed next year.
- Commercial services – this is doing well now but Paisley had a bad start with some initial problems which have been overcome now. Ayr and Hamilton however have done well through the year.

President states that he believes the Students Association is underfunded and will be requesting a larger block grant. The Strategic plan will start to be implemented next year, one of the first tasks will be a constitutional review. The Students Association has also secured over £200,000 in external funding. We have achieved the Silver award for Green impact and been shortlisted for Students Union of the Year by NUS Scotland.

President opens questions or comments from members. CPH comments that a student who was unable to attend council asked why we were promoting 99p drinks during Elections and not advertising Elections much, what do we want to priorities elections or commercial services? President outlines that there will be an elections review this year to improve this area, however appreciates the students concerns.

Alastair Adamson and Siobhan Wilson left the room- 1.35pm

(d) Student Association Priorities 2012-13 – Garry Quigley

President outlines the plans for Academic Session 2012-13. States that the focus on retention will continue with lobbying the University and government, asks that more students get involved. The Healthy Body Healthy Mind and Feedback campaigns will also continue, there is still work to be done here. We will also undertake a Constitutional review, this is long overdue and must happen next year, all changes will be presented to Council throughout the year.

President opens any questions or comments from Members.

Jade McCarroll suggests that there needs to be better Part-Time and Distance student representation as there is little access to University funding, there is also no SAAS funding and it is difficult to get overdraft facilities with banks. CPH informs Council that Student Services can provide some Part-Time funding but this is not much, however we can lobby services to get more money. President states that in the Post 16 response this issue was raised, it included financial, academic and personal issues. SR Co-ord informs Council of a survey carried out by Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU) looking into the experiences of Part-Time students, it is suggested that the Students Association use a similar survey and perhaps consult with GCU on how best to carry this out here at UWS. WCA Co-ord points out that NUS Scotland passed policy to run a campaign against course cuts and for better access to loans for Part-Time students, adds that dropout rates are at the highest levels with students facing a deferred resit decision (coursework/exam only) at approx 70%, they are not entitled to SAAS funding or benefits. There is

also a higher dropout rate with mature students whether they are Full- or Part-Time. Dropout rates for first year students is also high, however the number could be higher as the figures do not include those who dropout during the first 8 weeks of term therefore it is important to have a positive induction experience.

President opens questions or comments from members. CPH, on behalf of a student unable to attend, asks why the 99p drinks promotion for the Paisley Union was given priority over the SAUWS elections. President outlines that there will be an elections review this year to improve this area, however appreciates the students concerns.

7. Motions-

(a) Notice in terms of the Education Act 1994

President states that this motion is taken to Students Council each year and asks for re-affiliation to The National Union of Students of the United Kingdom (NUS UK)/NUS Services Ltd, British Universities and Colleges Sports (BUCS), British Universities American Football League (BUAFL) and Scottish University Sports Institutional membership fee. States that there are many benefits to affiliation to these organisations in terms of resources and support, however we also hold a large amount of shares in NUSSL and we do get some money back.

There is no speech against, Council move to vote.

	<i>Hamilton</i>	<i>Paisley</i>	<i>Ayr</i>
<i>For</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>-</i>
<i>Against</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>-</i>
<i>Abstention</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>-</i>

(b) A Helpline on Student cards

Jack Douglas outlines that the LGBT society attended NUS LGBT Campaign Conference and attended a Hate Crime workshop while there, as a result it got the society thinking how students could be safer. Informs Council most other Universities have some kind of emergency number on the back of student cards and suggests this would be beneficial to students at UWS. Comments that the number could be for a local organisation or a national one such as 'nightline'.

Jade McCarroll suggests that this is a great idea and we could also be handing out this type of thing in our fresher's pack. Thomas McLaren suggests that 999 should not be on it but thinks this is a good idea.

There is no speech against, Council move to vote.

	<i>Hamilton</i>	<i>Paisley</i>	<i>Ayr</i>
<i>For</i>	<i>Unanimous</i>	<i>Unanimous</i>	<i>-</i>

8. Elections- None

1.50pm video conference ended

9. AOCB cont'd

DPEW asked for any further items of business. There was a short discussion regarding the advertising of elections and members were asked to suggest additional ways in which students could be engaged in the process. It was agreed that face to face contact was the most effective method and proposed that Students' Council members have a responsibility to affect this role.

Chair closed the meeting by asking for opinions of members as to the effectiveness of the video conference format of the meeting. It was agreed that it had been successful and enjoyable, although more time should be allocated in future for the cross-campus section of the meeting.

Start: 12.35pm

Finish: 2.00pm