

WSU Student Council Minutes

Thursday 25nd April at 17:15-19:15 - Location: EE 2012

Members in attendance	Staff in attendance
Al Linforth (SU President and Chair) - AL Issy Price (SU Vice President Student Activities) - IP	Antonia Rossiter-Eaglesfield (<i>Director of Representation and Membership Services - Chair's Aide</i>) - ARE
Katherine Stone (<i>College of Health & Science</i>) - KS	Sophie Williams (<i>Chief Executive</i>) - SW
Elliot Atkinson (<i>School of Humanities</i>) - EA	Megan Lee (<i>Representation and Democracy Assistant - Minuting Secretary</i>) - ML
Emmalee Swift (<i>Women's Network Chair</i>) -ES	Sophie Smith (Student Activities Manager) - SS
Megan Thomas (Charity & Volunteering Societies Rep) MT	
Ronke Akintan (<i>Faith & Cultural Societies Rep/Race Equality Network Chair</i>) - RA	
Luke Marshall-Watkin (General Interest Societies Rep) LMW	
Casey Webster-Miles (Observer) CWM	
Jack Lambert (Observer) JL	
Ruttuja Mane (Observer) RM	

Agenda

	Item	Timings	Owner	Paper Attached
1.	Welcome & Introductions	17:15	AL	-
2.	Apologies		AL	-
3.	Declaration of interest		AL	-
4.	Minutes of previous meeting - 22.02.24		AL	-
5.	Matters arising		AL	-
Approval Items				
6.	Officer Reports*	17:25	AL/IP	In Email
7.	Sub Council Policies	17:35	AL/IP	In Email

8.	Honorary Life Membership	17:50	AL/IP	Verbal update
9.	AROG Code of Practice*	17:55	AL	In Email
Reporting Items				
10.	WSU Executive Committee Update	18:00	AL	Verbal Update
11.	Sub Council Summaries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Welfare and Inclusion Council - Education Council - Student Activities Council 	18:05	AL/IP	Verbal Update
12.	Trustee Board Update	18:15	SW	Verbal Update
13.	Update on live (current) policy and ideas progression. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic Life Support Policy Update • Mental Health Charter Update 	18:25	AL	Verbal Update
14.	All Student Meeting minutes*	18:35	AL	In Email
Discussion Items				
15.	SU Leadership Elections	18:40	AL	Verbal Update
16.	NUS National conference	18:45	EA	Verbal Update
Any Other Business				
17.	AOB <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gypsy, Roma, Traveller Pledge 	18:55	AL	
Next meeting: Next academic year (2024/2025)				

1. Welcome & Introductions

AL welcomed all members to the fourth Student Council of the year. Meeting was confirmed not to be quorate.

2. Apologies

Apologies sent prior to the meeting from Karyna Bludova (Chair of the International Students Network)

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Minutes of previous meeting

Due to council not meeting quoracy the minutes of the previous meeting could not be approved.

Action: ML to send all approval items via email.

5. Matters arising

Carried Over Actions	Owner	Update
Action: AL to find out why they ask in the canteen if you are staff or student.	AL	Completed.
Action: AL to Cristina Muradore for some communication about references for international students.	AL	Update: AL has not received a response to date.
Action: AL to discuss further with Kate Courage and confirm how students can book rooms in the library.	AL	Completed.
Action: SU Officers to follow up about the Basic Life Support policy and update at the next student council.		There is no update on this.

15. Elections

Item 15 was moved up the agenda.

AL introduced the Officer-elects to Student Council.

AL provided an update on the SU Elections 2024 and shared some of the headline figures as well as some of the wellbeing initiatives that were implemented this year.



The headline figures for this year's elections:

	2022/2023 (Achieved)	2023/2024 (Achieved)
Candidate turnout	7 candidates (1 president, 2 VPE, 4 VPSA)	5 candidates (2 President, 1 VPE, 2 VPSA)
Voter turnout %	11%	13.5%
Voter turnout	1,101	1,162
Ethnicity representation (Non-white candidates)	0% NB 4 candidates responded, not representative of our candidates	60%
Recommend a friend	74	120
Candidate attendance at Question Time	86%	100%

We gathered feedback from Welfare & Inclusion Council in December 2023 to also develop and strengthen our candidate welfare initiatives, which this year included:

- Enhanced Wellbeing Training
- A dedicated Candidate Wellbeing Space in the SU
- Free Candidate breakfast
- Quiet campaigning hour
- Candidate Wellbeing and Debrief event
- A dedicated, quiet space for candidates to use during results night

AL invited the Officer-elects to provide an overview of their manifestos and what they would like to achieve when they take up their roles in June.

Approval Items

6. Officer Reports *

Officer reports received no questions.

Officer Reports could not be approved as the meeting was not quorate.

7. Sub Council Policies

There were no new policies to discuss at this Student Council meeting.

AL updated the council on two active policies.

Basic Life Support - No response from Helen Scott - however AL has sent another email chasing a response and ensures they will meet with her before they leave/hand over to new officers to keep on top of it.

Mental health charter - university have signed up to this charter and are now working with UCU & Unison on proposing a joint Staff and Student Mental Health policy.

8. Honorary Life Memberships

IP and AL presented two nominations for Honorary Life Memberships, Aadil Dinn and Archie Eaton.

The Honorary Life Memberships could not be approved as the meeting was not quorate.

Action: ML to send all approval items via email.

9. AROG Code of Practice

The AROG Code of Practice could not be approved as the meeting was not quorate.

Action: ML to send all approval items via email.

Exec

AL provided an update on the most recent Executive meeting that took place on the 23rd April 2024.

There were no new club or societies to approve in this meeting. AL explained to Student Council that this is normal for this time of year, and we've had lots approved throughout the year. They provided an updated in Exec on the progress of officer objectives. AL shared how they are really proud of the progress Issy and they have made this year. They are now working to ensure they wrap everything up ready for their departure in June.

There was an update on the University of Worcester Dudley campus discussing how we, the SU, are going to support students studying there.

Finally, there was some Feedback provided from ARE about their recent trip to the Worcester foodbank. We are seeing how we can work with the local foodbank to ensure our students are supported with cost of living and exploring how we can bring supplies to this campus for when community cupboard is struggling.

EA asked if there are finalised plans on how the SU will support the Dudley campus? AL explained how Dudley campus students will be able to access our help and advice service and will be a part of our academic representation system. These students will be able to access the social side of the Worcester campus but there are questions about whether they will feel they can. We are waiting for numbers to be confirmed as to how many students will study at this campus.

10.Sub Council Summaries

Welfare and Inclusion

In the most recent Welfare and Inclusion council (27/03/2024) AL gave updates on policies that were taken to previous meeting as sadly they still had not hit quoracy, but AL reassured the council the work was being done by the SU regardless of policies being passed.

AL gave their President update and invited the networks and societies in attendance to give theirs too. AL explained how the networks had engaged a lot this year.

ARE delivered an 'EDI in the SU leadership elections' update, and shared how the discussions that took place in the December 2023 Welfare and Inclusion council informed changes made to Election processes for the 2024 Elections.

AL provided a Sustainability update. The SU are currently working towards our Responsible Futures Accreditation submission alongside the university.

Finally, we discussed the NUS liberation conference. We all looked at the policies which were being taken to NUS conferences this year. At the time of Student Council taking place all national conference policies had been voted on and approved:

- [De-colonisation campaign](#) - **PASSED**
- [For our Future: Creating the Liberation Collective in our national union](#) - **PASSED**
- [International Students](#) - **PASSED**
- [True Trans Liberation](#) - **PASSED**

Education Council

In the most recent Education Council (07/02/2024) councillors received a progress week protection policy. Unfortunately, the meeting did not hit quoracy for voting approval but there were some great discussions around progress week and what the SU and officers

can do next year to ensure university-wide student voice is consulted when they begin the process of reviewing progress week again.

PAT system was identified as receiving varied feedback, and AL noted to speak to AJ (University Provost) about this topic. Help & Advice team at SU are also working to support PATs with signposting and helping them feel confident in giving the right support to their students.

There were discussions around we can better support course and department reps ensuring they have a balanced workload. We are doing a piece of work within the SU with ARCSs and AJ (University Provost) to ensure a more effective academic representation system for the 2024/2025 academic year.

Al provided their officer update for their VPE remit. They shared that they were grateful to have been able to explore the opportunity of parts of the VPE role and thanked Education council and all department and course reps for their patience and support this year.

Student Activities Council

In the most recent Student Activities (11/05/2024) council there was a policy submitted for Non-monetary Societies. The policy did not receive enough votes to meet quoracy, so the policy went to an email vote. The policy reached quoracy through in person votes and email votes. The majority voted against the policy so it has therefore not been taken forward.

There was a discussion in groups looking at case studies for appointing committee members. There was also information given about Committee handover, general reminders, Club and Society of the month and TeamWorc points.

11. Trustee Board

SW provided Student Council with an update of the most recent Trustee Board meeting which took place on the 26th April 2024. The trustee meeting focussed mainly on the financial challenges of the union. SW shared that our financial challenges are the same as those of many universities and SUs around the country. Some universities are facing big cuts in staffing. Fortunately, our university is not one of those universities yet.

SW informed Student Councillors that our block grant from the University will not increase. This poses challenges for what we want to do and additional pressures. We will also experience some financial pressures from the increase in minimum wage.

SW updated on the rest of the agenda including that they signed off the financial procedures manual. RC and SW provided an update from the AGM from the SUSS Pension Scheme. SW explained that they also had the officer and exec updates and finally they discussed the Annual report on external speakers.

12. Policy Updates

Basic Life Support - There has been a lack of correspondence regarding the work to achieve this policy. The SU has continued to follow up and update when an update is received. This will be passed on to the incoming officers so they can continue to lobby for this policy.

Mental health charter - The University have signed up to the charter and are working with UCU & Unison on proposing a joint staff and student MH policy to the university and this is looking like a positive step.

13. ASM

AL apologised for the delay in getting the minutes of the All-Student Meeting (ASM) to Student Councillors. There were no questions received on the All-Student Meeting minutes.

15. Leadership elections

This item was covered earlier in the meeting.

16. NUS National Conference

EA delivered a presentation on his attendance at NUS National Conference. He started by explaining what NUS is and what the conference was. He then introduced the five policies that were discussed at the conference and the workshops connected to each policy. The five policies were as follows:

- Funding, Food & Shelter: Defending Students' Right to Basic Human Rights. **(EA attended this policy workshop)**
- Solidarity with the people of Palestine and preserving the student movement.
- Campaign for international student equality. **(RM attended this policy workshop)**
- For the Future: Reform to NUS democracy and organising.
- Increased FE representation in NUS.

RM shared some of the aspects discussed in the international workshop. Ideas discussed included an NUS international rep, SU rep dedicated to representing international students. They also discussed the issues international students experience.

ES asked a question around the Solidarity with the people of Palestine and preserving the student movement. She was under the impression societies were not allowed to discuss this issue as per guidance from NUS. ARE explained that this is not the approach that NUS was taking, and they have guidance available for how SUs should support students in these discussions. ARE also explained that the NUS National Conference agenda is set by its members. Policies are submitted to NUS; they are voted on by SU's and that's how the agenda is set.

General election:

EA shared some information given at the conference about the upcoming general election.

ES asked if the SU would put some information out to students about how to vote and how students can register to vote. SW confirmed communications had recently been shared for commonwealth citizens about registering to vote, and the SU will continue to communicate with students about voting rights and processes.

18. AOB

GRT Pledge

A policy was submitted a few years ago asking the SU to lobby the University to sign the GRT pledge. It was agreed and we were under the belief that the pledge had been signed. We recently discovered it hadn't been signed. It has now been signed by the University.

Student Voice Conference

AL provided information about the upcoming Student Voice Conference and encouraged councillors to sign up. They shared the agenda for the day highlighting the sessions students were able to attend. They explained that we would be hosting a rep celebration on the same day to share the success of our academic reps.

AL and IP thanked all of Student Council for their hardwork throughout the year.

AL and Issy shared their thank you's to all student councillors for their work over the year. AL shared they were proud of what them and IP had achieved. Student council thanked AL and IP for their work this year.

Further AOB and Questions

ES asked about the TeamWorc nominations and how the process works. AL explained that some categories are chosen by students whereas some categories are chosen by the SU staff to say thank you to our wonderful students.

RA asked for an update on the Racism Reporting channel, an idea she had mentioned in a network catch up. AL explained they had discussed this with Lisa Stansbie and it will be taken to EDI Oversight group on the 7th May and AL will get an update then.

EA gave an update on the retention steering group he recently attended and shared the key areas of discussion including welcome week, PATs, academic calendar and progress week.

CWM asked if it is possible to appeal policies that have not been approved through councils. ARE explained the process.

CWM also asked if it is possible to attend the EDI forum previously mentioned. AL explained that representation on this group now includes networks and AL will speak to the university to see if CWM is able to attend.

Action: AL to speak to the university to see if CWM is able to attend EDI Forum.

ARE asked councillors to fill out the student councillor feedback forms.

Chartwells food offering

IP delivered a presentation on food offerings on campus. Over the last 18 months, student council has discussed concerns regarding the food offerings across all the campuses. IP explained that her and ARE have compiled all this feedback into slides she shared with councillors. She explained that we would like councillors to add anything missing or any possible solutions on to flipchart paper around the room and then all this will then go back to the university for final review.

Meeting ended.



Actions:

Action: ML to send around all approval items round via email.

Action: AL to speak to the university to see if CWM is able to attend EDI Forum.