



Present: Sarah Nicholson, Vice-President Representation
Neil Benny, Vice-President Services
Mark Calder, Vice-President Communication
Daniel Lentell, Societies Convener
Neil Cardwell, External Convener
Tim Cobbett, Teaching and Learning Convener
Louise Crowe, Welfare Convener
Patrick Hannon, Accommodation Officer
Ross Harper, Community Officer
Linda Bergset, Equal Opportunities Officer
Sian Jamieson, SRC Editor

Absent: Ashley Addison
Jane Anderson
Nicola Bate
David Bisset
Alana Blewitt
Frances Butt Philip
Ali Carey
Ian Clark
Patrick De Vilbiss
Sarah Dods
Mary Ho
Julianna Hyjek
Fariza Ibrahim
Ben Jackson
Paul Joseph
Andrew Kesterton
Aphra Macdonald
Andrew MacKay
Calum Mackay
Raig McNee
Alison Murray
Liana Pia
Camilla Porter
Francesca Puig
Dawnn Relph
Kess Sivewright
Laura Steen
Elley Tomlinson
Sunniva Vikan
Chatrini Weeratunge
Luke Woolley
Ann Yribar

College of Humanities & Social Science

School of Arts, Culture & the Environment Ruth Cameron
Muriel Masson

School of History and Classics Kenny Young

School of Literature, Languages & Cultures Rose Fison
Antonio Giugliano

Moray House School of Education Katie Matthews
Louise Norrie
Amy Summers

School of Nursing Studies Katherine Cooper

School of Philosophy, Psychology & Language Sciences Will Patterson

School of Social & Political Studies Timothy Goodwin
Chris Harrop
David Orr
Chris Page
Andy Street
Alvin Tsang

Apologies: Alan Davis
Yvonne Evans
Jonny Flowers
Will Garton
Helen Hare
Timothy Jones
Jason Lingiah
Sebastian Nobert
Laura Owen
Richard Williams

College of Science & Engineering

School of Biological Sciences Gordon Bryden
Lewis Watson

School of Chemistry Jonathan Flitney
Lech-Gustav Milroy

School of GeoSciences Maggie Chapman
Peter McColl

School of Engineering & Electronics Ian Dale

School of Mathematics David Watkins

College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine

Medical Schools Kim Wilkinson

1) **Constitution**
The VPS welcomed members to the 5th Ordinary meeting explaining that, in the President's absence, he was happy to be chairing SRC.

2) **Minutes of 4th Ordinary**
The minutes were **approved** as read.

3) **Minutes of SRC Executive of 11 November**

Council **approved** the following student representatives on college committees:-

Humanities & Social Sciences Undergraduate Studies Committee – Will Patterson

Humanities & Social Sciences Quality Assurance Committee – Tim Cobbett

Science & Engineering Undergraduate Studies Committee – Lech-Gustav Milroy

Science & Engineering Quality Assurance Committee – Gordon Bryden

4) **Minutes of the Association Executive of 24 November**

4.1 **Socially Responsible Investment – British Petroleum**

Council **passed** the following motion proposed by External Committee:-

SRC Notes:

1. That British Petroleum(BP) is proposing to build a controversial 1,800 km Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline through Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey.
2. That BP is the world's third largest oil company and is seeking 70% of the costs, 3.3 billion, to come from public funds.
3. That the pipeline would militarize the corridor from the Caspian to Mediterranean Sea.
4. That building the pipeline would involve displacing 750,000 local people.
5. That the burned oil from this pipeline will contribute 160 million tonnes of CO2 into the atmosphere every year, equivalent to a third of total UK emissions in 2000.
6. That BP has signed agreements with Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey, exempting it from all laws – including environmental and labour – that may affect its profits.
7. That a campaign spanning 29 different countries has been running in order to try and prevent this pipeline being built.
8. The damage caused by this issue to BP's commercial reputation.
9. That BP has had some successful responses to shareholder pressure, particularly in abandoning their plans for a new Alaskan oil field in April 2000.
10. That Edinburgh University holds shares in BP.
11. That Edinburgh University has a Socially Responsible Investment policy stating that the university should put pressure on companies to stop environmental degradation.
12. That EUSA is mandated to pursue socially responsible investment of the university's portfolio.

SRC Believes:

1. That the recent events in Georgia underline the fragile nature of the ceasefire in the area. This would be further threatened by construction of the pipeline and the subsequent militarization of the area.
2. That BP's actions in constructing the pipeline constitute an act of environmental degradation.
3. That as an institution holding shares in BP, Edinburgh University has a duty to voice the concerns of the investor group over these issues.
4. That as a prestigious body the university can add significant momentum to the campaign against the pipeline.
5. That the university should instruct its Fund Managers, Baillie Gifford, to engage with BP on this issue.
6. That the form of this engagement should be communication with the highest relevant body within

- BP and voting on a relevant motion in an upcoming BP AGM.
7. That steps taken on engagement should be communicated to EUSA.

SRC Resolves

1. To mandate the President to represent the concerns over the proposed pipeline to the Central Management Group and work towards an active engagement policy. President
2. To mandate the President to ensure engagement and actions taken are open and transparent. President
3. To mandate the VPC to make details of these communications publicly available. VPC

5.1.2 Socially Responsible Investment – GlaxoSmithKline

Council **passed** the following motion proposed by External Committee.

SRC Notes:

1. That GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) holds a 7% share of the global pharmaceutical market and a significant proportion of its profits come from distributing HIV/AIDS treatment drugs.
2. That GSK has been involved in blocking access to generic AIDS drugs in Ghana amongst other countries.
3. That GSK began legal action against the South African government trying to import cheaper generic AIDS treatments.
4. That this legal action was dropped in 2001 after significant shareholder pressure.
5. That GSK has made important strides in developing HIV/AIDS drugs.
6. That 95% of the 35 million people living with HIV/AIDS do not have access to affordable life prolonging treatment.
7. That Edinburgh University hold shares in GSK.

SRC Believes:

1. That large pharmaceutical corporations have a responsibility to improve access to HIV/AIDS treatment.
2. That as investors in GSK Edinburgh University should be informed of what action is being taken to reach this goal.

SRC Resolves:

1. To mandate the President to request a report from the university's Fund Managers on GSK's current policy on access to HIV/AIDS drugs and their engagement with GSK on this issue to date.
2. That this report be published and made available to all interested parties within the university.

4.2 Co-option

Council **approved** the co-option of Ken Young to the External Committee.

4.3 Weighting of Honours

Council **passed** the following motion:-

SRC Notes:

1. The university will weight honours years consistently and uniformly across the university.
2. That the university will either weight honours years as:
 - a) 50% Junior Honours year, 50% Senior Honours year, or,
 - b) 33% Junior Honours year, 67% Senior Honours year
3. The university will make this decision at the December Senate.
4. Currently the weighting of honours varies across disciplines.
5. In the College of Humanities and Social Science the majority of honours years are weighted 50/50.
6. In the College of Science and Engineering the majority of honours years weighting is closer to 33/67.
7. University and student opinion is split on which option is fairest and would benefit most students.
8. That some courses may be taken by junior and senior honours students each year, particularly in

- HSS.
9. Courses in S&E tend to be specifically for each year.
 10. Students progress academically each year they are at university, that is they improve academically each year.
 11. Under either option students will receive credit for work done in junior honours.
 12. Under either option all students are marked to the same criteria.
 13. In the case studies undertaken by the university, students receive the same degree classification under either system.

SRC Believes:

1. The University should ensure that there is consistency within colleges.
2. The system in which colleges can adopt different weighting scheme will reflect better the differences between disciplines and would be preferable to a one size fits all.
3. When student opinion is split according to discipline the VPR should ensure that the negative implications of all options are outlined in order to protect all students' interests.
4. A uniform system, although problematic in some aspects, is easier for all students to understand. In particular joint honours students will benefit from a transparent system.
5. Students' academic progression should be rewarded (see Notes 10).
6. That all students should be treated equally and fairly with others in their year.

SRC Resolves:

1. To mandate the President, the VPR and the Teaching and Learning Convener to put these views forward to the December Senate.

Mr. Patterson asked what provisions were being advocated for students who go abroad for their third year and whose course requirements can differ as a result. The VPR indicated that all exchanges were different and this would be looked at on a case-by-case basis but dealt with after the decision was taken as to which system to use.

5) **Minutes of a Meeting of SRC Executive of 1 December**

5.1 **Ross Harper**

Mr. Harper's resignation was noted and Council applauded and thanked him for his sterling contribution whilst on SRC (applause).

5.2 **AGM Press Coverage**

Mr. Goodman drew attention to the press release which quoted a University spokesman saying that the AGM was neither representative nor a body that made decisions. He asked if there was going to be any public response to this public denunciation of EUSA's highest policy making body. The VPR indicated that the General Meeting was not a decision-making body for the University and it is the General Council who vote for the Chancellor. In reply to a further question, Council were informed that if they wished to make a formal response the President could do so.

5.3 **School Council**

Council **approved** the Chemistry School Council's constitution.

5.4 **University Security Advisory Committee**

Council **approved** the nomination of Neil Benny as the EUSA representative on this committee.

5.5 **Acting Community Officer**

Council **approved** the appointment of Gillian Chu as the acting Community Officer. In reply to a question from Ms. Bergset, Council were informed that if anyone wished to meet Ms. Chu they could do so at the Welfare Committee.

5.6 **Penalties for Late Submission of Work**

Council **passed** the following motion submitted by the VPR.

This SRC Notes:

1. The university proposals for the submission of assessed coursework. The main points are:
 - There will be a university-wide policy for submitting and receiving assessed coursework. The

guidelines will apply to coursework that is a substantial component of the course; they will apply where the submission deadline is more than two weeks after the issue of the work to be assessed; schools should produce clear practices for any submitted work.

- Late coursework will not be accepted without good reason, and that such work will otherwise be recorded as late and receive a mark of zero.
- If any school wants to divert from this it must obtain approval from the college and exact a penalty of 10% a day up to five days, after which a mark of zero will be given.
- If work is completed satisfactorily before feedback is given to the rest of the class it should be regarded as completed despite receiving zero when completion of the work alone is a criterion for success.

This SRC Believes:

1. There should be a university-wide policy on the submission of assessed work and practice for granting extensions. This would be a fairer system.
2. The university needs to make this policy clear to all, and make clear who is responsible for deciding what are exceptional circumstances, and valid reasons for giving extensions.
3. This information should be in all course handbooks, along with the questions for all significant pieces of assessed coursework and made available to students at the beginning of the year.
4. The proposed university-wide proposal is too harsh.
5. Late submission of coursework should be penalised in a way that would encourage students to hand in their work on time, but not to the extent of 10% a day or zero for late work.
6. A university-wide policy should deduct marks for late submission increasing with each working day that passes up to five days. The first day late would take of 5%, two days would be 10% off, three days 15%, four days 20%, and five days 25%. After five working days the work would receive zero.
7. The proposed extension policies are too tight.
8. Extensions should be given for medical and personal reasons and not for reasons that should have been foreseen in advance. Computer problems are not necessarily seen in advance and should be a valid reason for gaining extensions.
9. If students cannot submit work before feedback has been given to the class, students, including those in extenuating circumstances, should be given the option of submitting another piece of work during the academic year.
10. That the idea of retrospective extensions is a welcome policy.
11. For gaining a retrospective extension students should contact their Director of Studies and inform the person with responsibility for granting extensions of their circumstances and reasons for acquiring a retrospective extension.

This SRC Resolves:

1. To mandate the VPR and Teaching and Learning Convener to represent these views to the university.

6) Office-Bearers' Reports

6.1 Vice-President Representation

The VPR explained that she was incorporating the President's business within her report and drew attention to the fact that preparation for changeover of office-bearers would now need considerable care as the constitutional amendments had been passed to change the role of office-bearers. She further reported that the President had met a number of University staff in preparation for the Universitas 21 meeting and will report fully on his return.

She reported on the training for Schools' Volunteer Group which had just been undertaken and that there were two applications for Freshers' Week Coordinator. She reported that in the President's absence she would attend a meeting of Accommodation Services to discuss new build and would raise the point that it was important to retain the balance between affordable and income-generating accommodation.

She drew attention to the fact that the debate on top-up fees would now take place in January and reported that she was involved in a number of ongoing activities in relation to quality enhancement, e-learning, study space and the future of IT.

In reply to a question from Mr. McColl as to whether the presentation by SPARQS was better than the launch,

she explained to Council that SPARQS was the Student Participation in Quality, Scotland, a new development service set up by NUS and funded by SHEFC for class reps and office-bearers on issues of quality in teaching. She indicated that she would write to the organisation about her concerns and, if not answered adequately, she would write to SHEFC also.

6.2 **Vice-President Communications**

The VPC reported on a new branding and logo for the Student Festival which was an expansion of the Refreshers' Week from the previous year. Posters had been circulated to remind societies to fill in forms and there had been two meetings of the Festival Steering Group. He thanked Societies' Executive members who had helped. The VPC commented that World Aids Day had seemed quieter as regards the general public but there had been a good response within the University. The VPC further reported on the first meeting of Colloquy, a conversation between different faiths to lead to greater understanding and tolerance.

Finally, the VPC reported that he aimed to launch the new web site by the end of January and indicated that comments were still welcome. He also sought comments on the reasons for the success of the AGM in order to build upon it.

6.3 **Vice-President Services**

Mr. Benny apologised for the lack of accounts this term indicating that they would be ready at the beginning of the next term. He reported that SRC had £4961 left in the budget although some of this had already been apportioned leaving in the region of £4,000.

The VPS reported that he had attended a meeting of the Alcohol Action Group who were discussing the Nicholson Report on licensing which could result in some policy discussion for SRC and Committee of Management in the New Year.

He reminded school councils that if they wished to apply for a grant then they should do so as soon as possible.

He reported that interviewing resulting from the Management Review had started and informed Council that Karen Ingram had been appointed as Human Resources Manager although she would continue working as Training and Development Manager as well until an assistant was appointed.

Finally, the VPS informed Council that the previous Union Manager, Mrs. Leary, had died informing them that she had worked for the Union in a variety of posts between 1957 – 1999. A short memorial service would be organised.

7) **Societies' Business**

A meeting earlier in the day had been inquorate. Therefore, the convener explained he was unable to bring forward the recent applications for recognition. Members who were also members of Societies' Executive suggested that there had been a number of changes in the meeting date and asked that the convener ensured in future that it was sent out well in advance.

Council recognised:

The International Law Students Association
Big Two Societies

Mr. Lentel made the following report.

He pointed out that this term had seen subtle but necessary changes. With the prospect of a Vice-President Societies and Activities the role of the Executive as a representative body needed to be emphasised. Societies' Executive had successfully focussed efforts on ensuring that even the busiest member of the most active society can make a meaningful contribution to the Executive. He suggested that thanks to this work Societies' Executive is now one of the few EUSA bodies that is over-subscribed. Three good candidates stood to be ordinary members and others were in attendance at the meetings giving alternative ideas and fresh views. He reported that the Executive were focussed and ready to take up the challenges ahead. He indicated that next term would see amongst other things a development of Society of the Year into an event to remind all students of the vitality of the organisations represented. He finished by saying that, while more must be done, Societies' Executive could be proud of what has been accomplished.

8) **Conveners' Reports**

8.1 Academic Services

The VPR reported that Mr. Davis would soon return to SRC. She reported that school councils had concerns about inconsistent policy on class libraries and that the committee were investigating the situation and would develop proposals. She further reported that the anti-noise campaign was being extended to computing laboratories and that the committee were looking at learning space and study space. She drew attention to the fact that the budgetary plans for the library were due next month.

8.2 External

Mr. Cardwell reiterated that the decision on top-up fees had been postponed until January and suggested that there was a possibility of a backing down on the issue. He also drew attention to the "big conversation" launched by the government and suggested that student views on top-up fees should be made clear through this process. He indicated that, although some of the measures being introduced are positive, the principle of opposition to top-up fees should not be compromised.

8.3 Postgraduate

It was noted that the next meeting was on Wednesday at 5pm.

8.4 Teaching and Learning

Mr. Cobbett outlined all the various activities of the committee including the weighting of honours, late submission of work, class reps training, Quality of Assurance meetings and the international student event being planned for Student Festival week. He also indicated that feedback on international exchanges was still being sought and welcomed comments from members. The postcards advertising the academic activities were almost ready. He stressed the importance of timing in relation to the success of certain social activities indicating that the effects and advantages apply to the Teaching and Learning events.

He reported that two school councils had already met and Mr. Watson reported on the issues raised by the Biology School including a teaching paper, online resources and the problems with ESP. The report on Languages, Literature and Culture indicated that the meeting had not been well attended but the main issues raised had been library policy in relation to class libraries and the information being provided by course organisers on essay deadlines. Ms. Fison had suggested that it made more sense to have titles for example given by all subjects in course guidance at the beginning of term rather than a varied practice as currently exists.

The date of the next Teaching and Learning Committee is Wednesday, week 10 at 5pm.

8.5 Welfare

Ms. Crowe reported on a successful fund-raising for World Aids Day and indicated that the next meeting would discuss binge drinking and safety. She reported that she was unable to arrange a meeting room at King's Buildings. Therefore, the meeting would be held at the Potterrow.

9) **Private Members' Questions**

9.1 Penalties for Late Submission of Work

In reply to a question from Mr. Hannon, the VPR indicated that the penalty would not be cumulative and, in reply to a further question, she indicated that it would relate to the mark awarded.

9.2 Moose

In reply to a question from Mr. Lentel, the VPS indicated that he was very much in favour of the moose.

9.3 Definition of Fair Trade

In reply to a question from Mr. Watson, Council were informed that the definition is Fair Trade as certified by Oxfam.

9.4 SRC Coffee

The alliance of concerned members were asked to identify themselves before Council were assured that the SRC are supplied with Fair Trade coffee and had been since the beginning of term.

9.5 Noticeboards

Mr. Street drew attention to the fact that there had been 8 posters advertising the General Meeting on a

single noticeboard and asked for a justification of the flagrant flouting of EUSA's own rules. The VPC, having had the site identified as the Adam Ferguson Building, said he would investigate this as it should not be happening as the Association Executive had planned to adhere to their own rules.

9.6 Tim Cobbett Appreciation Society

SRC endorsed the full recognition of his contributions in reports to SRC.

9.7 Academic Exchanges

In reply to a question from Mr. McColl, Council were assured that consideration would be given to all aspects of exchanges.

9.8 Apologies

Ms. Matthews apologised for not signing the sederunt but pointed out that she did attend the 4th ordinary meeting.

10) Closure

The VPS closed the meeting at 8.02pm.