



Vice President Activities & Services: Kai O'Doherty

For meeting of 23/11/2017

Summary

Main projects this past month have included looking at the environmental sustainability of our commercial offerings (from food waste to a new Farmer's Market), projects on trans inclusion (training and a toilet audit campaign), and a strategic approach to including more postgraduate and Widening Participation students in Activities.

Inter-Society Collaboration

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| Summary | A key area of my work continues to focus on facilitating collaboration between different Societies and student groups. |
| Actions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skill Swap, an online platform where societies can offer and request skilled help from office bearers in other Societies, has been trialed and will launch by the end of the semester! • 'How To Guides', which Societies collaboratively create to advise other groups on topics ranging from sponsorship to LGBT+ inclusion, are in the works. • Office Bearer socials, based on Society category, finished up last week. • Our Social Enterprise Service pilot is going well, growing student-run social enterprises! • Supported the Gaelic Festival through hosting a Gaelic Café in Pleasance, and attending a Gaelic Awareness Session. |



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| Next Steps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Skill Swap and How To Guides will become live and accessible, with mechanisms for evaluation and growth. • Continued support of the Activities Representatives. |
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Engaging with marginalized & less engaged students in Activities

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| Summary | <p>Societies and volunteering provide a crucial element of social connection and personal development for students. I'm looking into barriers to participation for marginalized students, looking for short- and long-term initiatives to address these barriers.</p> |
| Actions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Activities & Sports Participation Grant applications have been reviewed, with over £17,000 of requests. With only a £10,000 grant, we lobbied the University for further funding of ~£8,000. • Held a discussion on postgraduate engagement in the Students' Association, as there lacks a concerted, consistent focus on postgrads. • Teviot's first monthly LGBT+ club night, CRUSH, launched last month to great success! The next one is Nov 24th. • Trans Awareness Training: designed and delivered training to Students' Association staff and Disability Services. |
| Next Steps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and create Strategic Plan at the Students' Association for Postgraduate Engagement • Wider discussion on widening participation in Activities beyond the Participation Grant |

Improving Services



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| Summary | The 'Services' portion of this Sabbatical role involves incorporating student feedback in our services, ranging from events to catering offering to ethical issues. |
| Actions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender-neutral toilets: currently running an audit of University buildings to identify potentially convertible loos – would love your help! • A regular Farmer's Market is to start in November in Potterrow, including local producers and student social enterprise groups! • The lack of vegetarian food in our services has been raised, with the Vegetarian Society partnering with us for Meat Free Mondays, a review of menus planned for Semester 2, and minor changes made for this Semester. • Student Centre: continuing to feed into architectural plans, including the student consultation held Nov 21st • Attended NUS Sustainability Conference, to support work to set up a food waste redistribution service internally and at the University, and explore better ways to reduce coffee cup waste. |
| Next Steps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure student feedback on the Student Centre is incorporated • Work with the new Commercial Director in January to ensure a new, greener direction of catering offerings • Complete the toilet audit, and pressure the University to convert these toilets into gender-neutral options |

Other

- Congratulations to Chloe Marvin, the Disabled Students' Officer, on an impressive Disability History Month programme!



- Esther (VP Welfare) and I gave a lecture to Gender in the Contemporary World students on sexual violence policy activism, supporting work to get better pro-survivor mechanisms in place at Edinburgh

Vice President Community: Ollie Glick

For meeting of 23/11/2017

Summary

Housing

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| Summary | More affordable housing, more co ops, better tenants rights |
| Actions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Esther and I met with The University, and they have agreed to make the changes that last month's guarantor motion asked for! • Patrick and I successfully lobbied to change the accommodation prices for university halls next year, getting a freeze on prices of the affordable beds, and a fairer deal for students (for detail please find me at council or email) • Myself and the advice place have finalized our housing awareness campaigns for late November, focusing on new tenants rights and finding flats post Christmas • At the welfare consultative group, we brought up the university being able to better deal with dodgy landlords, and will lobby further |
| Next Steps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue work on preventing Private hall reliance from the uni and more university owned halls |



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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the guarantor scheme is changed as the uni has agreed • Continue to work on getting another housing co op • Create a group to look at better systems of blacklisting dodgy landlords |
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Sustainability

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| Summary | Getting a more sustainable university and student association, with focus on investments, energy sources, and food waste |
| Actions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have had to wait for admin to go through, but are able to start recruiting a food waste intern in late November • Kai and myself visited the student sustainability summit in Coventry, and got great help with implementing a food waste pickup system, and ideas on a better coffee cup recycling system • Planning has continued for our sustainED follow up, focusing on food, which will be in Feb. We hope as many student led events are run as possible so if anyone as an event they would like to run get in touch with me • I met with students who are keen to relaunch the sustainable fashion show • I was part of a transport for Scotland consultation on making cycling better for students in the city, and fed in points many students have brought to me |
| Next Steps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with food waste intern to implement trial of food leftover distribution from the Students' Association where possible • Lobby the university on its own food waste systems • Expand the use of the sustainable campus fund and help students use it for their projects |



Other

- Our social enterprise pilot is up and running- we have 5 great enterprises signed up and we will support them throughout the year
- We have been working with the alumni department on a sustained platform for donors to give money into student needs
- Patrick and I met with Edinburgh council to discuss a cheaper rate for students on Lothian buses
- The Uni transport survey has concluded, and we hope to use the data to better lobby the uni for better student services
- It is STILL a pound to get the bus from kings buildings after 6pm. If the uptake is good we hope this will be rolled out across more services. Tell your friends!

President: Patrick Kilduff

For meeting of 23/11/2017

Summary

As it's the last Student Council of the semester I'd like to start by saying thank you for taking part, making your voice heard and holding us to account every month. We've been working on a whole host of issues from accommodation, transport and travel to the student center and furthering equal access and accessibility to both the Students' Association and the University. We've been doing our outreach at various campuses trying to speak to as many students as possible, finding out what you want us to be doing for you and making sure your voices are heard year round. If you have any questions don't hesitate to ask them at council or if you'd prefer to just email me at eusapres@ed.ac.uk.

Student Accommodation

Summary

In the past month the University has been setting the rents for accommodations across its estate. Myself and Vice-President



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| | <p>Community were fervently involved in negotiations with the University to ensure that the best deal possible was reached for students. We worked from initial proposals from the University to secure a price freeze on the lowest price accommodations, approximately 10% of beds, ensuring those who can least afford it don't face any rises whatsoever. We also ensured that no accommodation went up in price relative to predicted inflation levels meaning a real terms price cut for all students.</p> |
| <p>Actions</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We did not feel like it was fair for students to bear the burden of a price rise with the offering being so expensive already. We also ensured that postgraduate and undergraduate accommodation were treated equally when assessing affordability which was not previously the case. • We intensely negotiated with the university to ensure that all accommodation fees would rise less than predicted inflation so there would be a real terms price cut for all students. • Secured a price freeze on the cheapest 10% of accommodations. |
| <p>Next Steps</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with the Vice-President Community to develop an equal, fair and just long-term accommodation strategy over the coming year to create a much more affordable housing offering. |

Birthday Big Cheese

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| <p>Summary</p> | <p>You deserve a birthday present from the Students' Association and we've been working to deliver this for the many people who voted for it and our members who deserve it! As of Semester 2 you'll be able to get into the Big Cheese for free in the week of your birthday.</p> |
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| <p>Actions</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This was a key manifesto pledge of mine. I've been working with our Entertainment and Events department to make sure we could implement this for students and give something back to our members. • There are a few more exciting ideas in the pipeline in this regard and there are more details to follow in the coming weeks |
| <p>Next Steps</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We're finalizing the operational details with the potential for some prizes and surprises for some of the people celebrating their birthday with us but the most important thing is to tell your friends the birthday Big Cheese is a thing, it'll be free if it's the week of your birthday and you should come celebrate with us. Starting in semester 2! |

Other

- Finalized approval for a multimillion building of Postgraduate Centre at the Old Kirk
- Meetings with councilors, MPs and MSPs to lobby on behalf of students on a number of issues
- Continuing involvement and development on improving the University's offering in terms of Special Circumstances, Study Away and support for international students.
- Undergoing a process for appointing new trustees
- Selection of the latest team for University Challenge
- Continuing to lobby for improvements to transport infrastructure including better road surfacing, bike lanes, lighting; general improved road safety.
- Preparing to assess the impact and data of the £1 trial from KB
- Continuing to negotiate and participate in discussions to find a fairer, more affordable deal for students in terms of transport in the city
- Implementing governance restructuring including
- Opening of the new Pleasance complex
- Met with members of Development and Alumni in the University to continue the development of the Mentoring App.
- Worked with the Sports' Union and our Vice-President Activities and Services to deliver the Participation Grant



Vice President Welfare: Esther Dominy

For meeting of 23/11/2017

Summary

This report summarises some of the main projects I've been working on, but to provide a bit of introduction, my three main objectives are around improving mental health support, preventing sexual violence and harassment, and continuing work to improve students' day to day experiences, including facilities for parents and carers.

Mental Health and Wellbeing Week

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| Summary | This is the third year we have run Mental Health and Wellbeing Week, a week of events aimed at reducing the stigma around mental health and providing advice and guidance to students. This year it was held earlier in the year in semester 1, running from the 13th-17th November. |
| Actions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ran a week-long programme of almost 50(!) events, speakers, workshops, drop-in sessions and activities that were run by us centrally, groups of students and Schools across the University (you can see the full list here www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/letstalk) • Ran a campaign to promote the mental health training offered to Personal Tutors, encouraging students to sign a letter to their Head of School asking them to promote the training and treat it as a priority. • Had really good engagement from across the University – this year not only did we have Students' Association and student-run events, but a whole range organised by staff in various parts of the University. |
| Next Steps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debrief to find out what went well and what could have gone better to help prepare my successor plan for |



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| | <p>Mental Health and Wellbeing Week 2018. If you've got any comments/thoughts about the week, I'd be really interested in hearing them, so get in touch at VPwelfare@eusa.ed.ac.uk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thinking about how we can take the PT mental health training campaign forward. There were only 3 sessions planned for the remainder of semester 1 that we were able to target (Maths, Divinity and Education), and once we know which Schools will be receiving the training in 2018, look out for a re-run! • More events – why should they only happen during Mental Health and Wellbeing Week? We had a really big programme but obviously weren't able to cover everything, so if there's something you want to see get in touch. |
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Special circumstances review

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| Summary | <p>Student Council has previously passed policy around improving the University's special circumstances and extensions policies to make them more accessible to students, in particular student parents and carers, and improving this system is one of my priorities for the year. The University is currently looking at ways to improve the process of applying to make it easier to use, fairer and more consistent, which we are involved in.</p> |
| Actions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The University has now held a series of workshops and interviews with students about their experiences of using extensions and special circumstances (after receiving over 80 applications within two days) and I'm working to secure more student feedback through surveys and other methods. |



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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mapped out the problems with current extensions and special circumstances procedures across the University, with the help of Chloë Marvin, our Disabled Students Officer, the Advice Place and others, to communicate to the University. • Attended staff workshop on the proposals to change special circumstances and extensions processes and fed in what students wanted to see out of this, including quicker responses to applications and being allowed to submit an application pending evidence (which could then be submitted later.) • Met with staff responsible for University policy about the possibility of introducing caring responsibilities as additional criteria for Special Circumstances, which is likely to happen. |
| <p>Next Steps</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaising with the team working on the project, to discuss the feedback from the student workshops/interviews with Chloë Marvin, our Disabled Students Officer. • Stay involved in the process of developing a new system for special circs and extensions to make sure it's as good as it can be and all student feedback has been taken on board by the time it's introduced for the next academic year (18/19). • Emphasising the need to back up any new process/policy with a culture that treats students fairly and with compassion! |

Sexual violence and harassment & No One Asks For It campaign

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| <p>Summary</p> | <p>One of my priorities for the year is around preventing sexual violence and harassment on campus – lots of my predecessors</p> |
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| | <p>have worked on this, and last year the No One Asks For It campaign was launched as a joint campaign between us, the University and the Sports Union. We're now looking at how to develop and relaunch the campaign, as well as other ways to improve the support survivors receive at the University.</p> |
| <p>Actions</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No One Asks For It was launched for semester 1 with the same design as last year – digital and physical posters have gone up and this has been sent out via email to students. • Met with University staff about the possibility of relaunching the campaign with a more survivor oriented message and signposting to support. This is likely to happen for the next academic year (18/19), but we will be looking at how to alter the campaign in smaller ways for semester 2. • Met with University and Advice Place staff to map out how University policies and processes for reporting sexual violence work currently and how they should be improved. • Conversations with senior University staff about the issue of staff-student sexual harassment and violence and the need for specific policy on this issue. • The University has recently bought some online training for staff around how to respond to disclosures which we are able to access and is being circulated to our staff in relevant positions. • After a motion passed at the last Student Council, we have money to fund a supply of the Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre (ERCC) survivor's booklet. These will be printed in the next few weeks, and once we have them will be circulated to the Advice Place, Student Counselling Service, and other places for students to access them. We will also promote the online version of the booklet through our channels. |



Next Steps

- Looking to provide more space for student voices as part of the No One Asks For It campaign – as part of this will be looking to set up more events and activities in semester 2 – please get in touch if you care about this and want to be involved!
- Upcoming meetings about University policies on sexual violence and harassment to better map out what is happening at the moment. Hoping to later open this out to wider group of people (including students who have used the existing process) for input on what the new process should be.

Vice President Education: Bobi Archer

For meeting of 23/11/2017

Summary

November has been a super busy, but fun-packed month for representation and democracy! I've been pursuing with my manifesto points; reducing the pressures of semester 1, PhD's and joint degrees, and developing the student representation system. My proposals regarding manifesto point 1 and 3 have both been approved by Senate and is now to be implemented by the 3 colleges. Additionally, I have been working on securing university funding to support nursing students and starting conversations around the support for BME students. I've also been finalizing the Student Partnership Agreement and Widening Participation Strategy, to ensure that they both fulfil the purpose of benefiting our diverse student body.

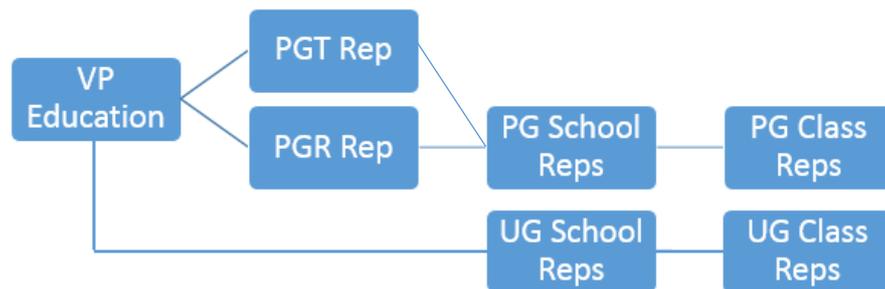
Enhancing the Student Voice through an Effective Student Representation System

Summary

Since the 2012/13 academic year, the student population has increased by 20%. In the same time period, the number of class representatives



has increased by 143%, from 1163 to 2808. The Rep system is inconsistent across the University, with the term 'Class Rep' potentially referring to students representing a tutorial, class, programme or year group depending on the school's system. The ratio of reps to students in each School is also significantly inconsistent, with one School have 1 rep for every 3 students in their School. The Students' Association recommends a ratio of 1:40, at degree-programme level.



Benefits to students;

- Prevents feedback fatigue. Students will no longer be asked to provide feedback by each individual rep for every tutorial and course, but once per semester regarding **any** feedback relating to their degree
- Allows for a broader discussion that includes tutorials, courses, degree-programmes and the general university experience
- Ability to build a relationship between the School and 'Class' reps as the numbers will be streamlined and manageable
- Allows for the 'Class' reps to escalate issues they're not able to solve independently or through an SSLC to a School rep or the Vice President Education
- Ensures that students on joint-degrees are represented

Actions

- Senate Learning and Teaching Committee endorsed my proposal for a new student representative system, with the following actions
 1. Endorsing the new representative system



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| | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Signposting a specific member of staff within each school to facilitate and support the representatives and SSLC's 3. Helping to close the feedback loop by distributing the minutes and action points from student-staff meetings to the website and LEARN 4. Exploring LEARN as an online platform, so that each programme can facilitate a conversation, gather and distribute feedback 5. Providing reps with NSS (National Student Survey) and CEQ (Course Evaluation Questionnaire) information, to help shape discussions at SSLC and School level |
| Next Steps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss with Academic Services and Heads of School how this is going to be implemented in practice, to ensure consistency across the institution • Develop the training within the Students' Association to support the new representative system • Ensure that the infrastructure is in place so that there is a clear line of communication between Class, School, PG reps and the Vice President Education • Explore LEARN with Academic Services as an online platform to facilitate conversation between reps |

Kings Buildings & Expansion of the University

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| Summary | <p>There are approximately 10,000 students across PG and UG level studying within the College of Science and Engineering. The number of students across the institution is expanding, whereas the estates and provision has not expanded in the same proportions. Students studying at Kings Buildings are</p> |
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| | <p>generally quite dissatisfied with the services provided by the university and the knock on effect of this can be that they add further tension to the limited study space within the central area.</p> <p>Additionally, the nature of the disciplines can often be quite different in terms of contact hours and the geographical location of study. This can make it quite difficult to engage with central-based services.</p> |
| <p>Actions</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Created a Kings Building Forum for School reps to discuss issues relating to the experience on campus, which is also attended by the College Registrar, Bruce Nelson and the College Dean for Students, Anthony Maciocia • Secured a place on both the Merchiston House and Kings Buildings Nucleus boards, to ensure that both projects are fulfilling the requirements of students studying at KB • Advocating for a similar policy to be implemented in CSE as there is in CAHSS regarding online submissions. For all submissions to be submitted online, and feedback to be provided in the same way, with an opt-out service for equation based assignments. |
| <p>Next Steps</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embedding the Kings Buildings Forum as part of the Vice President Education's agenda for the next generation of sabbatical officers, to ensure that issues are progressed • Create a working group within the Students' Association to look at the current barriers for engagement and to develop a strategy moving forward • Ensure that the redevelopment for the Merchiston House are accessible and fit the needs of KB students, through consultations with reps and students • Feedback into the initial phase of the Kings Buildings Nucleus project, which is a 10 year phased program |



- Advocate to the new principal Peter Mathieson in February to slow down the rate of expansion, until the provision for students is adequate. This could take form of a campaign, as well as meeting with him to converse directly.

Other

- Launch of the Student Partnership Agreement. Applications are now open for staff and students to place bids for funding for projects (up to a maximum of £500). Further information about submitting a bid can be found by contacting me at vpeducation@eusa.ed.ac.uk. Please note that the deadline for submission of bids is **Friday 15th December**. Applications will be considered by a panel and responses to applicants will be sent by the end of w/c 18th Dec. However, we will reopen the funds in Semester 2 for additional bids.
- The Widening Participation Strategy is being finalized. Following the discussion at the previous student council, I advocated for there to be further consideration in the implementation plan for home educated students, nursing students and guarantor schemes for students from low-income backgrounds, which the board were very receptive of.
- Working with the university to create a policy regarding Lecture Recording, advocating for this to become opt-out. This will result in consistency in usage of Lecture Capture, and for all lectures to be recorded unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- Awaiting for the College-level Learning and Teaching Committee's to see how the recommendations from my Pressures of Semester 1 paper will pass, which was endorsed by the Senate Learning and Teaching Committee.
- Producing lanyards for all elected representatives with the bonus of a 10% discount in the Students' Association services. Let's celebrate the dedication and achievements of our representatives!
- Co-presenting a paper, alongside Academic Services to the Senate Learning and Teaching Committee regarding LiberatEd.
- Securing a position on university committee's that discuss the Personal Tutoring system, to be a key priority of focus for Semester 2 – so watch this space!