



VP Activities and Services: Kai O'Doherty

For meeting of 26/10/2017

Summary

Another month has zoomed by, and I've continued to make steady projects on my main campaign objectives. Below is a brief summary, but feel free to ask me more questions or contribute your ideas! Also, congrats to those newly elected at our by-elections this month!

Inter-Society Collaboration

Summary	A key part of my election manifesto, and approach to Activities, has been prioritizing inter-society collaboration, whether that be joint events, skill/knowledge-sharing, or collective representation. The Activities Representatives, Skill Swap Platform, How-To Guides are other projects fall under this.
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1-on-1 Objective Setting meetings have been completed, with each Rep identifying interesting initiatives they plan to pursue this year• Held our first Activities Executive meeting, and meetings of the Funding and New Societies sub-committees• Work has begun on a few How To Guides, for example on getting external sponsorship for societies• Weekly Office Bearer socials for different society categories have been held, helping Office Bearers meet each other and find points for collaboration• The Team Volunteering weekly volunteering opportunity has been launched to great success!



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborating with Edinburgh Students' Charities Appeal (ESCA) on coordinating collection-based volunteering • Multiple meetings with the Sports Union on points of collaboration, from Mental Health & Wellbeing Week to volunteering opportunities • Expanded access to Students' Association rooms and benefits to school-based Councils
Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test and develop the Skill Swap platform, and fully launch soon • Continue to coordinate the development of How To Guides • Meet with the newly-elected Activities Representative for Dance, Music & Theatre

Engaging with marginalized & less engaged students in Activities

Summary	<p>Societies and volunteering provide a crucial element of social connection, personal/professional development and student voice in the Students' Association. I'm looking into barriers to access/participation for certain groups of students, looking for short- and long-term initiatives to address these barriers.</p>
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launched applications for the Students' Association's Activities & Sports Participation Grant, of £10,000, providing UK Widening Participation students with funds to cover costs of accessing Activities & Sports • Working with the International Students' Centre to use the Activities Lounge for their lunchtime lounge, and have met with the Vice Principal International to strategize the ISC's future partnership with the University



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Postgraduate engagement: reaching out to the Postgraduate Society; reviewing research on postgraduate engagement and interests at UofE and other Students' Unions' initiatives
Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene the selection panels once applications for the Activities & Sports Participation Grant close • Further research into economic barriers to accessing Activities, and benchmarking solutions in other institutions to look for larger-scale solutions • Continue to lobby the University with the International Students' Centre for more permanent partnership with the various Internationalisation wings of the University • Holding an internal Students' Association workshop on how to better reach out to, and support, postgraduate students • Work closely with the Postgraduate Society, PG School Convenors, and PGT & PGR Reps to address the imbalance in postgraduate engagement in Activities and the Students' Association • Compiling a list of all the available funding for students to support initiatives/projects that have lacked funding in the past

Improvement of Students' Association Services

Summary	<p>The 'Services' portion of this Sabbatical role involves involving student feedback in our services, ranging from events to catering offering to ethical issues.</p>
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I was involved in the interview panel, selecting our new Commercial Director! She will begin in the new year.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A monthly Students' Association LGBT+ Club Night, CRUSH, has been launched, after hard work from Delphi our LGBT+ Officer! This first event is Friday, October 27th in the Teviot Underground. • Meetings continue with the University and the architects on the new Student Centre • Food Waste: in the process of setting up a partnership with the Shrub and their Food Share initiative, to better reallocate food waste from our services • Continuing working with the University to ensure gender-neutral bathrooms are provided across their estates, in partnership with BLOGS • Research into challenging the planning and licensing laws around bathroom facilities, which pose a barrier across Scotland to building gender-neutral toilets in buildings • Collaboration with the Edinburgh College of Art UG School Rep, Michelle, and the Wee Red Bar to improve our services and support at ECA; part of consultation on ECAfe updates
<p>Next Steps</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Widening student consultation on the Student Centre is in the works, and a broader consultation is planned for November • Food Waste: need to establish a liability waiver to enable the Food Share process; support from the Social Responsibility & Sustainability (SRS) department at the University • Completing a 'toilet audit' of University buildings to identify existing spaces which could be converted into gender-neutral toilets, to then be given to University Estates for potential conversion • Meeting with BLOGS and the NUS Scotland LGBT+ campaigns around a potential legal campaign to change planning and licensing regulations



Other:

- Work continues on our Social Enterprise Pilot service this semester, supporting 3 – 5 existing and new student-led social enterprise projects
- Our Volunteering Service brought in 25 local charities to the Careers Service Volunteering Fair on October 12th, which went very successfully!
- Room booking user functionality updates are being explored
- Black History Month is on, and you should all check out the amazing events Diva's coordinated!

VP Community: Ollie Glick

For meeting of 26/10/2017

Summary

Summary of activities since last report

Housing

Summary	Affordable housing, tenants rights, co ops
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have been progressing talks about potential new housing co-op opportunities with the university • A lot of time has been spent with Patrick lobbying on the student uni halls rent for the next year- fighting for more affordable rooms, and capping increase in rent as much as possible. • Planning student private housing market campaigns to raise awareness for students about their rights, and the nature of the private market.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research has continued on pbsa, and what to lobby the council on. • Lobbying to have accommodation included in papers on widening access at the university
Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fee strategy group was Wednesday 18th, whatever comes of accommodation prices, ensure that affordability for students is paramount in long term thinking going forward. • Secure more meetings with the council • Implement our housing student campaigns

Sustainability

Summary	Food waste, cycling, a sustainable campus
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have secured an internship from srs to have an internship focusing on food waste. • Searching for other universities health and safety waivers, allowing us to create our own to partner with food share. • Planning the be bright be seen campaign, as well as liaising with the university transport team to get cycling changes going. • Input and work on university renewable energy investment (watch this space) • Initial membership of a food 'task force' sounded out, with first meeting coming soon
Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit intern, create waivers, design pilot of food share working with student's association.



Other:

- An opportunity arose to help local schools with a chronic lack of maths teachers. With Maz in Pals, a pilot scheme is being launched with the maths department to train students up to help facilitate lessons in these local schools.
- If successful we hope this will become a sustainable project!
- Have ensured that the new srs community grant, allocating money for local projects, is available to individuals, students and unofficial groups.
- Ongoing discussions about free tickets for the 'sleep in the park' charity event for students.
- I had my first sabs on tour at kb house, which was a success!

VP Education: Bobi Archer

For meeting of 26/10/2017

Summary

September has been a very hectic but exciting month welcoming all of the new and returning students (also a shout-out to all of the new members of Student Council). Since my last report I have continued to lobby the university to create change, however now taking these to College and School level for implementation after gaining approval at the university senate committee.

Reducing the Pressures of Semester 1

Summary	<p>The Semester 1 examination period is shorter than that of Semester 2. Depending on the day in which the academic year falls, students are given between 3 and 7 dedicated days to prepare for the examination diet. A student may be required to prepare for 60 credits of material in this time, equating to a quarter of their degree classification, as such, some students may feel at an academic disadvantage. This can be particularly problematic for visiting students who may still adjusting to university structures and life.</p>
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	<p>Updates:</p> <p>Senate Teaching Learning Committee (LTC) has approved my paper regarding the following implementations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 11 to be free of new examinable material • Week 6 or 7 to be free of regular (weekly) assignments • All courses to provide a structure/template of the examination if adjustments have been made and for new courses • Each school to have a staff/student member who arranges activities and workshops to support students' learning and provide academic guidance
<p>Actions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the recommendations are implemented at School level • Lobby the university for consistency in PT's to ensure all students receive the same standard of academic support • Develop a policy regarding online submissions in the College of Science and Engineering
<p>Next Steps</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take the paper to College level (TLC) to see how the policies will be implemented and discuss any restrictions on their ability to do so • Continue to lobby the university to improve the training for PT's (including mental health training) and to further the incentivize staff to uptake this role • Collaborate with staff in the College of Science and Engineering and School Reps to create a policy regarding online submissions

Joint Degrees



<p>Summary</p>	<p>Joint-degree students make up 14% of our student population, yet they are a cohort of students that is often overlooked. Although we thrive upon offering the Edinburgh Experience and flexibility to students within their degree programme we often lack the systems in place to support these students and give them any sense of belonging.</p> <p>Updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The University has agreed to have a joint-degree focus in Teaching Programme Reviews • The Business School now have allocated positions for joint-degree representatives on their programmes
<p>Actions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lobby for each school to have a joint-degree coordinator, following the model from the School of Mathematics. They act as a first point of call and arrange events for students to meet one another on joint-degree programs • Consistency in deadline extensions, special circumstances and for progression hurdles to be transparent • A review of joint-degree programmes to ensure that the structures in place are there to support students through their studies whilst providing flexibility
<p>Next Steps</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue developments with the Dean of CAHSS, after consensus was found at Senate Teaching Learning Committee • Feed into the Service Excellence committee regarding Special Circumstances and work with the advice place to reduce the issues for joint-degree students • Ensure that extra consideration is given to joint-degree programmes when the university is making implementations, to reduce any further complications



Enhancing the Student Voice through an effective Class Representative System

Summary

The number of class representatives has increased by 143% since 2012-13, taking us from 1163 to 2808, whilst the student population has only increased by 20%. Additionally representatives are recruited with inconsistent duties across the institution, and by tutorial, class, programme and degree level. The ratios of reps to students are also inconsistent which has resulted in some schools having low levels of engagement but more support from the Students' Association because of their large numbers.

If a student has not completed the online training then they do not receive recognition on their HEAR record, so it is unlikely that the student is up taking any of the duties including student outreach, consultation and representation. The consequence of this is that students may be voicing their feedback to inactive class reps, whom are not forwarding these responses. Additionally, they are not relaying any of the feedback from staff-student meetings to students because of their absence.

With the proposed model, we would have a system that prioritized quality over quantity in-line with other Russell Group institutions, in particular ones that have high levels of student voice satisfaction in NSS*. By reducing the numbers, student representatives would receive more personal and relevant support from both the Students' Association and University to clarify the expectations of the representative role and empower them to be as engaging as possible with the student body.

Updates:

1. The Senior Vice-Principal Charlie Jeffery is very much an advocate for reducing the number of representatives to



	<p>enhance the student voice, especially in recent light of the National Student Survey (NSS) results</p> <p>2. The Business and Veterinary School have adopted the new system, with Mathematics and Chemistry were already using the model (4/24 schools down!)</p> <p>In-person training was delivered to the PG class reps in the Business School following their new model</p>
<p>Actions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to lobby the university to reducing the number of class representatives, for a quality over quantity system • Explore of degree-programme level representatives, as used in some schools within Science and Engineering • All schools to appoint a joint-degree representative per each year of study • More personalised training and support to outline the expectations of the role. The training will have three key focuses; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How to collect representative feedback ○ The purpose and function of committee meetings and how to signpost to the relevant platforms ○ How to close the feedback loop to the students ○ A long-term aspiration that all class reps will be elected during the by-elections in October
<p>Next Steps</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to meet with Heads of Schools and key members of staff to implement the proposed system for the next academic year • Lobby for a university policy that all schools with joint-degrees must allocate positions for representatives on these programmes • Collaborate with Students' Association reps to develop the introductory training (online and in—person)



Other:

Starting to open the conversation with the university regarding the support and attainment of BME students in the institution. Additionally, collaborating and supporting our amazing BME officer with her initiatives regarding LiberatEd.

President: Patrick Kilduff

For meeting of

26/10/2017

Summary

It's been a great start to the semester and incredible to be welcoming students back, working together to make Edinburgh a better place for everyone. We've had our by-Elections where we elected some fantastic new postgraduate representatives, trading committee members, NUS UK and Scotland delegates and an Activities Rep. We've been working on manifesto points and addressing a whole host of issues both in the Students' Association and with the University; we've also been going out to various campuses through outreach programme ensuring students voices are being heard year-round not just at elections. The below is an overview of a couple of the many projects I am undertaking; if you would like to hear more or raise an issue you'd like to see acted upon email me at eusapres@ed.ac.uk and we can discuss and/or arrange a meeting.

Study Space Tracker

Summary	One of my manifesto points was to create an online tracker of study spaces available in the library as well as map spaces available across campus.
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have had several productive meetings with the heads of both Library Services and Information Services.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new swipe-out as well as swipe-in system will make this data much easier to collect. • We should have a tracking system in place by the start of semester two. This should be a traffic light system which can identify when the library is: Quiet, Busy and Very Busy.
Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I will liaise with the Schools and Colleges to start building an accurate and up-to-date map of study spaces, their accessibility and amenities across the University. The current provision is not enough. • To explore how the technology of Internet of things can be used to give students a more informed view of study space availability. The traffic light system will be a useful tool for students but Internet of Things technology has the potential to give real-time data on a section-by-section basis of where • I will continue to push for further investment in library services technology and space availability so students are not dealing with study space stress on top of academic stress..

Alumni Mentoring Platform

Summary	<p>We have been working with Information Services and the Development & Alumni services in the University to develop a platform for students to have the opportunity to engage with, learn from and be mentored by alumni from University. This will mean that no matter where you are in the world and no matter where you want to go in the world the extensive network of University Alumni should be there to support, guide and mentor you in achieving your goal.</p>
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<p>Actions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The platform has been in development for some time and something the Students' Association has been lobbying on for a while now. • We are entering the later stages of the projects development. The University completed the tendering stage and a supplier has been agreed (Aluminati). • Aluminati has experience in developing similar platforms at similar scale and calibre universities (Cambridge, UCL, Warwick et al). They provide a holistic package which takes into account the variety of relationships an alumni or student is seeking to develop • In speaking with the developer one of their great selling points is to ensure the system is bespoke for the institution and student-users therefore your input is extremely valuable in shaping it the way you want it to work for you.
<p>Next Steps</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be a soft-launch in a few schools in the beginning of Semester 2. This will be to deal with teething problems as well as understand better what students want and need from the platform. This will also be a crucial time to develop a critical mass of engagement from alumni who were are confident will uptake the platform. • If you have any ideas you would like to feed in to the project then please email me on eusapres@ed.ac.uk

VP Welfare: Esther Dominy

For meeting of 26/10/2017

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

Summary	<p>Mental Health and Wellbeing Week was set up in 2015 after student council voted to hold a week of events around mental health. This is the third year it has run, and this year it will be held earlier in the year in semester 1, running from the 13th-17th November.</p>
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of events are confirmed for the week, including alpacas (who are incredibly soothing), a networking event with Lothian Bipolar, a 'meet the advisor' drop in with the Disability Service, a chance to hear directly from the University about mental health initiatives (and ask questions), fab events planned by BME Officer Diva around BME mental health and Disabled Students' Officer Chloë on self-care and lots more! • We have secured a speaker thanks to the Sports Union – the Olympic swimmer Michael Jamieson, who will speaking alongside Mercy Corps and SAMH (hopefully in McEwan hall if we are able to secure that as our venue). • Supporting the planning of student-led events, including a verbatim play about students' experiences of mental health by EUTC. • Planning some actions that will hopefully have more concrete impact, including an email campaign around mental health training for Personal Tutors encouraging more schools to sign up – if you'd like to help coordinate this in your school/society please get in touch!
Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with societies, elected reps and students to get as many events/projects planned as possible! If you'd like to be



a part of the week or run an event please please get in touch
(vpwelfare@eusa.ed.ac.uk)!

Special circumstances and extensions

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 also currently looking at ways to improve the process of applying for extensions and special circumstances to make them 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 and recent graduates about their experiences of applying for extensions and special circumstances, after receiving over 80 applications within two days. • Liaising with the University to secure more student input into this – a lot more students applied than could be interviewed, so I'm trying to make sure these students also have the opportunity to give their feedback. • Mapping 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 other sabbs, to communicate to the University.
Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waiting to hear back about the outcomes of the workshops and interviews and arranging opportunities for further student input. • Chloë and I are to meet with the University following this to discuss the outcomes from the workshops and input directly as well.



No One Asks For It campaign and sexual harassment

Summary	<p>One of my priorities for the year is around preventing sexual violence and harassment on campus – lots of my predecessors 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 further develop and relaunch the campaign, as well as other ways to improve the support survivors receive at the University.</p>
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No One Asks For It was launched for semester 1 with the same design and content as last year – this will be circulated on various channels and the poster boards and other materials will go back up. • For semester 2, we are looking at how we can adjust the message of the campaign to be more survivor oriented, and to better signpost the support available. • In terms of University policies on sexual violence and harassment, I have met with University and Advice Place staff to map out how the process works currently and how this could be improved. • The University has recently bought some online training for staff around how to respond to disclosures which we are able to access and will also be circulated to our staff in relevant positions.
Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working to develop the pledge part of the No One Asks For It campaign, so that staff and students can share and promote the actions they have taken to combat sexual harassment and assault on campus – e.g. by attending bystander training, encouraging staff in their school to be trained, and so on.



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- Further meetings with the University to map out their policies/processes on sexual violence and how these could be improved to make reporting easier for students.
 - Securing opportunities for students to provide feedback about the process and what should be changed.
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