Student Council
Thursday 25 January 2017, 6 – 8 pm, Pleasance Theatre

AGENDA

1. Welcome

2. Accountability
   Paper A

3. Motions
   i. Funding a Ticket to "Improving BAME Outcomes in Further and Higher Education" Conference (expenditure request) Paper B
   ii. Improved Financial Support for Student Nurses (NUS Scotland) Paper C
   iii. Preventing unfair power of private halls (NUS Scotland) Paper D

   Break

   iv. Fight for Affordable Rent (NUS UK & Scotland) Paper E
   v. Supporting Picturehouse and McDonalds Strikes (NUS UK & Scotland) Paper F
   vi. Solidarity with Iranian students and workers (NUS UK & Scotland) Paper G
   vii. Keep Fighting Climate Change! (NUS UK & Scotland) Paper H
   viii. Sustainable Growth in Student Numbers Paper I
   ix. Build more affordable student housing! Paper J
   x. Mandates for NUS Delegates Paper K

4. Upcoming events
1. Welcome

Your guide to Student Council

What is Student Council?

The Student Council is the primary mechanism to discuss ideas and create Students’ Association policy. It is open for all students to attend and vote, and students are actively encouraged to do so. Meetings contain the following key features:

1) You can hear and discuss Sabbatical officers’ accountability reports.
2) You are given the opportunity to make speeches for either a motion or expenditure request. All members are then invited to debate on the topic and vote on its passing.

Discussion of Motions

Student Council is chaired by a trained and impartial Student Council Facilitator to ensure debate is fair and orderly, and in accordance with the Students’ Associations’ Safe Space Policy. The Facilitator decides the running order of the meeting, which is usually as follows:

a) Facilitator invites speeches for a motion or expenditure request (usually the proposer of the motion speaks first, or a representative on their behalf)
b) Speeches for and against amendments
c) Vote on amendments
d) Speeches against a motion or expenditure request
e) Summation
f) Questions and comments
g) Vote on motion or expenditure request

Voting

Once an issue has been adequately discussed, there will be a vote by paper ballot. Elected Student Council Members are given weighted votes of 1.5, compared to 1 for a vote from an unelected member. Additionally, only Elected Representatives can vote on expenditure requests. Please note that abstentions made at Student Council meetings will count towards the total number of votes. The table below explains the different voting outcomes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If a Motion receives...</th>
<th>&lt;33%</th>
<th>33-67%</th>
<th>67% or more</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ordinary Motion</td>
<td>Motion does not become Association policy</td>
<td>Motion is referred to online ballot</td>
<td>Motion becomes Association policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraordinary Motion</td>
<td>Motion does not become Association policy</td>
<td>Motion does not become Association policy</td>
<td>Motion becomes Association policy</td>
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</tbody>
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The online ballot

Student Council online ballots take the form of a secret ballot in which all members are asked to vote either for, against or abstain to an Ordinary Motion which has failed to receive enough votes at Student Council. Please note that abstentions made on the online ballot will not count towards the total number of votes.

Ballots will be posted on the Students’ Association website and communicated to students within four working days after the associated Student Council meeting. Ballots will normally be open for two working days, with results being announced within two working days after the ballots close.

Online ballots will need to obtain a Quorum for motions to pass. If an Ordinary Motion(s) passes on this Quorum then it shall become Association policy, and will subsequently be published on the Students’ Association website.

Safe Space Policy

Student Council meetings are run in accordance with the Students’ Association’s Safe Space Policy. A meeting shall be deemed to be a safe space where no-one is disadvantaged or discouraged from contributing, so long as they respect others’ ability to contribute; and where the principle of equal opportunities is respected.
Edinburgh University Students’ Association Democratic Meeting Code of Conduct

Introduction

The Students’ Association’s democratic meetings including Student Council Meetings, Committee Meetings, and General Meetings are the Student’ Association’s primary policy-making bodies. It is therefore vital that all students feel safe, respected, and able to fully participate.

Edinburgh University Students’ Association strives to be a place where contentious topics can be debated accessibly and with consideration for the needs of all participants. However, we recognise that some topics may be particularly difficult or distressing for some members to discuss.

The purpose of this policy is to enable us to facilitate productive debate in a way which is respectful and enables all members to participate.

Code of Conduct

Attendees of democratic meetings are expected to conduct themselves in a manner which is respectful and does not disadvantage or discourage others from participating in the discussion. This includes but is not limited to:

- Allowing others to speak when called upon by the meeting facilitator.
- Refraining from behaviour that discourages others from speaking or prevents others from hearing the speaker including speaking over, interrupting, heckling, or laughing.
- Where appropriate, using content warnings to highlight – in advance – discussion of sensitive topics. This would generally take the form of “[I am about to mention [insert subject here]]” and should be followed by a pause to allow members to remove themselves from the meeting if they wish.
- Respecting others’ experiences, even if they differ from your own.
- Refraining from utilising social media to harass or intimidate others.

Safe Space Policy

All democratic meetings are conducted under the Students’ Association’s Safe Space Policy. The aim of this policy is to create an environment in which all students, staff, and visitors feel welcome, respected, and able to fully participate in our events and activities. Attendees

1 https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/pageassets/eusapolicy/Edinburgh-University-Students-Association-Safe-Space-Policy(1).pdf

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should take care to read and understand the Safe Space Policy before participating in any democratic meeting.

It is the responsibility of the meeting facilitator to uphold the Safe Space Policy and ensure it is being implemented.

If you experience or witness an incident which you believe is in breach of the Safe Space Policy you can report it either:

- **At the time**, to a member of Students’ Association staff or the meeting facilitator
- **At a later date**, by emailing complaints@eusa.ed.ac.uk

The Students’ Association’s Complaints Procedure is confidential and impartial. Incidents will be handled on a case-by-case basis. If an individual is found to have breached the Safe Space Policy they may face one or more of the following actions, at the discretion of Students’ Association staff or the meeting facilitator:

- Verbal Warning
- Request for an Acknowledgement of Wrong-doing and Apology
- Removal from Venue

Incidents may also be referred for investigation under the Students’ Association’s Disciplinary Procedure or the University’s Disciplinary Procedure.

If you would like to report an incident to the Police, you can access support and advice (including information on Third-Party Reporting) through the Advice Place, the Students’ Association’s impartial and confidential advice service.
2. Accountability

Paper A

President: Patrick Kilduff

For meeting of: 25/01/18

Summary

Welcome back and Happy New Year! I hope you had the break you deserved and given the time of year well done on bracing the cold to make Student Council. Between the November Council and now about two months have passed meaning a lot of work has happened. Below is a highlight reel of some of the projects I have been working on. Alongside this and other ongoing projects an occurrence of note is that I also represented the Students’ Association in Parliament giving evidence to the Joint Committee on Human Rights in Parliament on the topic of Free Speech at Universities. As always any questions you would like to ask please feel free to ask on the night, after or before the meeting or email me on eusapres@ed.ac.uk.

Honouring Gordon Aikman

Summary

Gordon was an ardent charity campaigner raising awareness and over £500,000 for motor-neuron disease(MND) medical research, a former Sabbatical Officer at the Students’ Association and student at the University. Gordon sadly passed in February of 2017, aged 31, and a Student Council motion was passed to honor his memory by lobbying the University to rename a lecture theatre after him. After quite a tough process we are pleased to say that following a naming ceremony later this year George Square Lecture Theatre, the University’s largest and well known lecture theatre and festival venue, will be renamed the Gordon Aikman Lecture Theatre honouring the memory of this incredible student.

Actions

- Lobbied the University to find the most impactful and meaningful location to rename after Gordon.
Next Steps

- The date of the renaming will be announced in the near future.
- Through Gordon’s work continuing to raise awareness around MND, honoring his life’s work.

Plans for the new Principal

Summary

In the coming weeks the new principal, Peter Mathieson, is arriving at the University to begin his tenure. Currently most students don’t know their Principal, the power they hold or how impactful they can be on the experience we have at University. We want to change this and make sure we as students are at the forefront of shaping his strategy and the future of the University; ensuring our concerns, issues and problems are raised as directly and openly as possible and setting the precedent for this being the case.

We have lobbied for and secured events with the new Principal across the campuses.

There will be a number of student-lead events with the incoming Principal to provide an environment in which we can raise concerns and make suggestions directly and honestly. There will be smaller events occurring across various campuses with two larger events occurring at King’s Buildings and in the Central Area.

Actions

- The Sab team have worked to provide the new Principal and his office a list of key events to attend, including various school councils, and are finalizing the arrangements for events that will be lead by the Students’ Association.
## Next Steps

- Dates, times and locations of events will be released once confirmed.
- Any suggestions for events or areas you think it is good or important for the new Principal to see and think we may have overlooked please let us know.

## Student Centre Update

### Summary

Following the student consultation held last semester we have received generally positive feedback about the new design for the Student Centre. As a part of this project we were working with the University to try find a much improved space for the Counseling Service and Disability Service in a more accessible location.

We are delighted to be able to finally share, after a lot of hard work by fantastic members and representatives from the Students’ Association especially our Disabled Students’ Officer, Chloë Marvin, and Judith Drake; that a renovation of 7 Bristo Square will take place and provide a new, more accessible and welcoming home for these services that are so vital to so many students.

This will not only provide an enhanced location but an expanded footprint for expanded service provision and an accommodation to provide a wider variety of services as well.

I would like to thank Judith and Chloë for their invaluable help and contribution in shaping, informing and keeping this project in the best interest of the students who use the services. Your time and effort is vital and we are immeasurably grateful.

### Actions

- Worked with the Disabled Students’ Officer, Chloë Marvin, Judith Drake, Vice-President Welfare and the University and architects to develop preliminary plans for the project
Ensured the focus was on improving the quality, capacity as accessibility of the existing services; not just recreating current provision.

Worked with the Vice-President Community to lobby and negotiate for a total investment of £8.4million.

Next Steps

- Ensure student involvement and key student user group input is kept at the core of the project until its completion.
- Continue to push for improved investments in these services across the University
- Canvas suggestions for names for this new development.

Other

- Working towards more affordable student transport options
- Secured a continuation of the £1 fare trial from King’s Buildings for the second semester
- Continuing to meet with local MPs, MSPs and Councillors alongside the VP Community to lobby for a variety of changes including accepting gender neutral toilet provision into planning regulations.
- Working on a variety of Estate’s projects including the Old Kirk Postgraduate Centre, Student Centre to ensure a maintained student focus
- Working with the VP Community to secure a long term residential strategy with the University
- Held a trustee board meeting where we were able to confirm that our charity as a body is overdraft free for the first time in years.

VP Welfare: Esther Dominy

For meeting of 25/01/2018

Summary

This report summarises my progress on the main projects I’ve been working on. 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.

Special Circumstances

Summary

Student Council has previously passed policy around improving the University’s Special Circumstances and Extensions policies to make them more accessible – including to student parents and carers – and improving this system is one of my priorities for the year. The University is currently looking at how to improve the process of applying for Special Circumstances and Extensions to make it easier to use, fairer and more consistent and I am also working to make changes to academic policies for Special Circumstances and Extensions, amending them to cover a broader range of circumstances with more appropriate evidence requirements.

Actions

- Attended Curriculum and Student Progression Committee (CSPC) alongside VP Education to support the addition of non-routine parental/caring responsibilities to the list of grounds for Special Circumstances and Extensions. Pleased to say this was approved and will be updated for the 2018/19 academic year!
- Also at CSPC advocated for a change to the Extensions policy to add exceptional/unanticipated employment commitments to the list of grounds for Extensions. This is likely to be approved although the detail is still to be determined.
- Helping to develop a proposal to add ‘experience of sexual assault or harassment’ to the list of grounds for Special Circumstances and Extensions, and to amend the evidence requirements to reflect the types of evidence most likely to be available to students in those circumstances. This will be going to CSPC in late January.
- I have continued to communicate students’ concerns about the current process for applying for Special Circumstances and
Extensions. Changes that are likely to go ahead are: more regular Special Circumstances committees to allow quicker responses to applications, the ability to make an application and have it accepted pending evidence, more standardised and reliable processes for approving applications and removing the supporting evidence requirement for all Extensions up to 7 days, among other changes. This should be implemented for 2018/19 academic year.

- I have been comparing the information given to students in different Schools to understand the range of ways Special Circumstances and Extensions (as well as support services like the Student Counselling Service and Student Disability Service) are communicated. Ideally, I would like to see a ‘template’ of appropriate advice/guidance that is included in all documents on this type, and will be looking at how to do this.

Next Steps

- Continue to be involved in the process of developing a new system for Special Circumstances and Extensions to make sure student feedback has been taken on board by the time changes are introduced. Meeting with the team working on the project with Chloë Marvin, our Disabled Students Officer, to check-in about our priorities.

- Emphasising the need to back up new processes and policies with a culture that treats students fairly, with compassion and with an accurate understanding of the impacts of mental illness, caring responsibilities, sexual violence and other circumstances.

Sexual violence and harassment policy

Summary

One of my priorities is around improving the University’s response to sexual violence and harassment. This includes looking at the policies and processes in place for students who choose to make a
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Representation & Democracy

disclosure or report to the University and how they can be improved.

## Actions

- I have been meeting 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. Have met with students to highlight problems with the policy for University consideration and am compiling a paper to outline our key concerns and priorities for this.

- Staff-student sexual misconduct has been highlighted as an issue by the National Union of Students (NUS) and I have been promoting opportunities to feed into the research being carried out by NUS. I have also been pushing for the introduction of a staff-student relationships policy that outlines acceptable conduct and boundaries – this is likely to happen but the policy is yet to be written.

- The University has recently bought online training for staff on how to respond to disclosures. The Students’ Association has access to this and it has been circulated to our staff in relevant positions.

- Reviewing the Students’ Association’s Zero Tolerance approach – this outlines the operational procedure for if a student makes a complaint of sexual harassment in our venues. Currently looking at ways to better promote this so that students are aware of what to do if they experience harassment.

- I have helped secure money from Student Council to fund a supply of the Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre (ERCC) survivors’ booklet. There have been delays printing the booklets, but 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

- Continuing to meet about University policy/procedure to finalise the ‘map’ of what currently happens. Once this is complete, the discussion will be opened out to a wider group (including students with experience of reporting to the University, student groups and external organisations) to seek feedback on the current system for handling reports and proposals to improve them. This should inform a University strategy that should hopefully be written by September 2018.

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No One Asks For It campaign

**Summary**

In 2016 No One Asks For It was launched as a joint campaign between the Students’ Association, the University and the Sports Union. We’re now looking to develop and launch a new campaign for September 2018, focused on survivor support and with more student involvement.

**Actions**

- Attended student consultation meeting run by Kathryn Pearson, our Women’s Officer, and Sexpression to gather feedback on No One Asks For It and examples of other campaigns to inform what the next campaign will look like.
- Met with representatives of other Edinburgh universities to discuss region-wide cooperation with campaigns. This is unlikely to develop into a single campaign, but was a useful opportunity to share experiences and learn from others.
- I am beginning to develop events and discussions to take place later this semester – please get in touch with me if you’d be interested in running something on this topic (whether it’s a panel discussion, art, fundraising, etc). Contact me at vpwelfare@eusa.ed.ac.uk
Next Steps

- Working with Kathryn to use the feedback gathered from students as a basis for developing a new campaign over the coming months.

Other

- I have been invited to sit on the panel for the University’s upcoming review of support for Parents, Carers and Mature Students and am currently working to get our reps for Parents, Carers and Mature Students invited to this and secure opportunities for students to feed in.
- Myself and others have been involved in discussions around the University’s plans for a new Wellbeing Centre at 7 Bristo Square. We pushed for more space for the Student Counselling Service and Student Disability Service and I’m really pleased to say the plan has been approved with additional funding for several more rooms!

VP community: Oliver Glick

For meeting of 25/01/2018

Summary

A mix of tying things up pre-Christmas, and getting back into projects after the break. Made good progress on ongoing housing campaigns, such as a long term residential strategy with the university, and community links and grant schemes being created. I also worked on internal policy change at the student’s association.

Housing
**Summary**  
affordable housing, more co-ops, better tenant’s rights

**Actions**
- Had a very productive meeting with the SA president and university estates about the long term residential strategy, and incorporating key student priorities
- Getting new co-operative’s into part of the strategy are progressing well
- The advice place housing fair is on Feb 5th! We have incorporated lots of alternate housing options at the fair, like co-ops and ‘homeshare’ schemes
- Lobbied hard on particular new halls from the university having the right proportion of affordable beds
- Wrote a proposed NUS Scotland motion about regulating private halls

**Next Steps**
- Continue the above lobbying campaigns, and plan how to best raise awareness of new tenants rights

## Community engagement

**Summary**  
Support local community initiatives, and increase opportunity for students to get involved

**Actions**
- I have been working with the SHRUB (swap and reuse hub) on securing a new premises for their exciting ‘zero waste towns’ project
- I had very productive meeting with the Greyfriars charteris community center, concerning their new spaces, and how our student social enterprise could be involved
- Along with the uni social responsibility and sustainability department, I have been creating criteria and mission
statement for the community grant scheme, and will be on the panel allocating funds up to 5000 pounds to local community projects who have applied from the new community grant scheme

- I have had good meetings with bedlam about their long term building plans, and how the student’s association fits in

Next Steps

- Solidify agreement with shrub and charteris
- Complete first round of community grant scheme
- Meet with the university about bedlam

Other

- INTERNAL student association change
  We have now signed up to the shared uni and srs ‘good food policy’ giving us additional sustainability stipulations with our services

- We have also signed up to the UN sustainable development goals for the same reason

- After lobbying, we are reviewing our staff parental leave offering, with a view to making it more fair

- Finally, interviews are in place for our food waste intern. We have received confirmation that uni catering will allow them to also audit their practices, which will make the intern’s time much more valuable

- We are exploring how we can best tackle coffee cup waste on campus, using innovative moves from other student unions,-VP activities hopes to present a paper to the university this month

- SustainED food day is in place for Feb 15\textsuperscript{th}, with student led events and lots of great food, and food awareness planned.

- We have managed to get the bus pound fare from KB after 5 extended to this semester! Tell your friends. If enough uptake is received we can use this to lobby Lothian buses for a bigger pound fare rollout
Myself and the other Sabbaticals lobbied successfully to secure more counselling service rooms as part of the health and wellbeing center, as opposed to the rooms being used for something less pertinent for student needs.

Vice President Education: Bobi Archer

For meeting of 25/01/2018

Summary

It’s post-Christmas and there’s five months left so I’m motivated to make the most of the second semester and look forward to working with many of you throughout! The main projects I’ll be working on this Semester is supporting joint-honours students, reviewing personal tutoring and carrying on with the implementation of the programme-rep system.

Joint-honours Support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary</th>
<th>Joint-honours students make up 14% of the student body and consistently express their dissatisfaction with the structures and support that are in place for them through University surveys. They also score the institution lower than students reading one subject in the NSS survey. It’s important that these degree programmes are recognized as importantly as single-honours and that there are adequate structures in place to support their experience with the University.</th>
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<tr>
<th>Actions/ Updates</th>
<th>I’ve been meeting with the Sabine Rolle the Dean of CAHSS throughout the month to collate all of the issues for students on joint-degree programmes. This list consists of (by no means an exhaustive list but through student reports, survey data and consulting staff this is the beginning of our mapping out process):</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Clashes in compulsory courses</td>
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<td>2. Clashes in coursework/take home exams/dissertation deadlines</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
3. Lack of communication between the two partnering Schools
4. Limitations in curriculum design, depending on the options for elective courses
5. Difficulties in gaining academic guidance/advice
6. Inconsistent communications of deadline extensions and special circumstances
7. Limited student support in the latter half of the programme title
8. Can feel to be a greater workload and more effort
9. The difficulties of back to back lectures, with the pressures of travelling between campus’
10. Lack of community and sense of belonging

- Following up the Teaching Programme Review (TPR) team to ensure that they have a joint-honours focus for 18/19
- Representing students on an individual basis regarding course clashes, deadline and examination conflicts and inability to progress with their studies at a University level to ensure that students are given appropriate extensions etc.

**Next Steps**

- Continue to work with Sabine Rolle to formalize a report and proposal for rectifying the issues regarding joint-degree programmes and providing students with better support
- Organise focus groups and a student consultation to gather a wider representation of joint-honours degrees to ensure that all of the issues are included within the report
- Present the report to the Teaching Learning Committee, with support from Sabine Rolle to create a “working group” within the University that’s remit is specifically to work on the findings of the report and to enhance the student experience for joint-honours students
- Continue to represent students on an individual basis as they contact me, to ensure that they’re given the appropriate support and outcomes based on their circumstances
## Personal Tutors

### Summary

The NSS results show that a large number of students are dissatisfied with their Personal Tutor (PT) and that there is inconsistency across the University. Additionally, through the free-text comments it is clear that there are also inconsistencies in the individual schools. Schools which have a greater variety of subject areas and joint-honours students tend to have a lower satisfactory level than those which are more streamlined in their programme provision. As seen in the Graph (refer to back of report) Divinity, Chemistry and Physics have the highest student satisfaction with their PT, whereas LLC, PPLS and SPS are amongst the lowest.

### Actions/Updates

- Reviewing the PT model to ensure the quality of the system is consistency and to a good standard. The School of Chemistry recruit a specific number of PT’s, whereas the School of SPS automatically assign all academics with a PT role without necessarily reviewing their skills.
- Push for better incentives for academics to want to be a PT by providing them with allocated hours in their workload model for student interaction and for their tutoring to be within the criteria for promotion.
- A better process for matching tutors with tutees, ensuring that students are matched with an academic from their subject area and that they can support them if they have additional requirements.
- Allowing joint-degree students the choice of which school their PT is assigned, with the option to change this each year of their degree as their academic interests may change.
- Liaise with the Esther, the Vice President Welfare to ensure that PTs are uptaking the Mental Health training.

### Next Steps

- Work with Alan Murray, the Assistant Principal of Student Support and College Deans to review the PT model and investigate the potential for incentives.
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:

- Lobby the University to allow students from joint-honours programmes to choose where they’d like their PT to be allocated, and to be given the option to change this each year
- Lobby the University to review and develop the training currently given to PTs to ensure that it’s relevant to the student bodies’ current needs. This is with the aim to increase engagement with additional training, to collate this into one session as appose to adding extra to the workload of PTs
- Create a condensed and more engaging guide for PTs with the relevant places to signpost students if they’re not able to ask student questions. This may reduce the risk of PTs providing students with incorrect information and advice and to ensure that they’re seen by the correct people, i.e the Advice Place
- Work with the Academic Services to create a survey for students to provide feedback on their individual PT. This will allow the School to see key themed issues, but also see consistent issues with individual PTs and can help rectify them. Any bias related to surveys will also be considered when reviewing the findings
• 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 / Updates

• Since the Senate Learning and Teaching Committee endorsed my proposal for a new student representative system, I’ve been meeting with the individual Heads of Schools to discuss the implementation process.
• Mathematics, Business, Veterinary Studies, PPLS and HSS are currently using this model or adopted it after discussions for 17/18
• LLC, HCA, ECA and SPS are currently mapping out how the system could look in their school
• I’ve scheduled in meetings with the remaining Heads of Schools this month to discuss their position. They will then report their method for 18/19 to Charlie Jeffery, the Senior Vice-Principal of Learning and Teaching
• In addition to reporting on the School’s formalized system for 18/19 they will also have to assign a member of staff to support and develop the representatives
• Started planning the online training content for the Programme Rep training within the Students’ Association
• Met with the University data specialists to request that survey data (NSS, PTES, PRES, CEQ, Mid-semester feedback) is configured to a condensed and engaging format for class-reps to engage with and facilitate discussion in meetings
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Next Steps</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meeting with Information Services to discuss the development of LEARN as an online platform to facilitate discussion and gather/post feedback with students</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developing the online training with input from the Programme Representatives to ensure that it’s tailored to their school</td>
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<td>Planning <strong>in-person</strong> training, tailored to each School for the Programme Reps. This will be a 3 year phased project due to the volume of current representatives and the new developments in the representation system</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Students’ Association to work with representatives to develop a toolkit to help collate and distribute feedback, as well as communicate with their students</td>
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<td>Work with the Data Specialists to consult Student Representatives through focus groups on the data they would find useful and how they would like it displayed (they mentioned £25 Amazon vouchers, just saying)</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Vice President Education to provide an annual report to the Teaching and Learning Committee with issues from School Reps so that the University governing bodies are aware of student concerns at a local level</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lobbying the University in regards to funding for nursing students, I’ve met with students and staff within the School to develop asks for the University and National Union of Students (NUS) to give them equal access to University bursaries and awards <em>(more context can be seen in a motion I’ve submitted to this Student Council)</em></td>
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<td>My paper on Reducing the Pressures of Semester 1 passed at Senate level and then again by the Colleges, which means that these will now be implemented in practice for the 18/19 academic year</td>
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<tr>
<td>Co-presenting a paper, alongside Academic Services to the Senate Learning and Teaching Committee regarding LiberatEd <em>(exciting, watch this space and Diva is amazing)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Liaising with the University and College Union (UCU) about their potential strike regarding their pension schemes and unsatisfactory working conditions/pay</td>
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- Created a new lecture recording policy with the University to ensure that lecture capture is used as consistently as possible. The policy is open for a student consultation on whether this should be opt-in (individual academics choose whether or not to use it) or opt-out (everyone has to use it, unless exceptional circumstances are discussed with the Head of School). I strongly encourage you to respond to this in favor of an opt-out service so that lectures are recorded in a consistent manner across the University.
- The second launch of the Student Partnership Agreement funding. 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 16th February.
Vice President Activities & Services: Kai O’Doherty

Summary

Since last Student Council, I have been bringing together different research, discussions and proposals around key campaigning objectives, signaling a key point in seeing these goals come to fruition. This has largely been regarding society room bookings, gender neutral toilets, funding for participation in sports and societies for bursary-receiving students, and addressing disposable cup waste.

Improving our Commercial Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The ‘Services’ portion of this Sabbatical role involves incorporating student feedback in our services, ranging from events to catering offering to ethical issues. With our new Commercial Director, Michelle, starting this semester, I hope to make more movement on the overall direction of our Services.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Gender-neutral toilets: after a successful audit of many University buildings, numerous Schools have already made changes. I’ve written a broader report to be presented to University Estates at the end of the month.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Our new Farmer’s Market is successful and expanding, including our own student social enterprises.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Meat Free Mondays launched, with recipes from VegSoc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Food Waste: hiring an intern to audit our services re: food waste, to make recommendations to us and the University.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Research and negotiations on reduction of disposable coffee cups, along with the VPC.
• More vegetarian options added to our offering in general.
• Following student requests, sanitary bins have been approved
• Student Centre: meetings with Venue and Catering consultants underway.
• Meeting with the Parents’ Rep and VPW to explore a child-friendly space in Teviot.
• Continuing to run Trans 101/Awareness workshops for Students’ Association staff.

Next Steps
• Gender neutral toilets: meet with University Estates for more broad-sweeping changes.
• Work with the Food Waste Intern in their research.
• Shape a proposal for a campaign/programme to address disposable cup waste on campus.
• Secure Teviot space for student-parents.

Inter-Society Collaboration

Summary
A key area of my work continues to focus on facilitating collaboration between different Societies and student groups.

Actions
• Give It A Go Week, week 1 of the Semester, was a huge success and the biggest of its kind to date! Hundreds of events engaged countless students in new activities.
• Skill Swap, an online platform where societies can offer and request skilled help from office bearers in other Societies, was fully launched in Give It A Go Week
• Our Social Enterprise pilot service continues to grow, with five groups registered for the year. The Dragon’s Den event to decide funding is Jan 24th.
The Students’ Association’s Volunteering Service has a new visual marketing campaign, hoping to attract more students to the online database and volunteering societies.

Working with ECA students who are holding an interdisciplinary event in February at the Firehouse, bringing together different disciplines on joint projects!

Next Steps

- Promoting and evaluating the use of the Skill Swap platform, which students have asked for over a few years, to gauge use.
- Supporting the Activities Representatives to achieve their event/project objectives this semester in their respective society categories.
- Begin to compile How To Guides, and decide on format/design.
- Finalize & publish a ‘Find Your Funding’ flowchart to help students find money for projects.

Engaging with marginalized & less engaged students in Activities

Summary

Researching ways to reduce barriers to participation for marginalized students, including reducing costs and supporting oft-forgotten groups of our students.

Actions

- The Activities & Sports Participation Grant for Semester 1 was successful disseminated; we were able to open it for Semester 2 for the first time. Patrick & I are exploring long-term solutions to making this funding broader.
- Further discussion with the PGT and PGR Reps on the Students’ Association’s support for postgrads, including more events in Semester 2 and long-term research needs.
Secured student representation on the Old Kirk Project Board, a University Estates project aimed to create a postgrad hub.

Discussions with the Activities Executive on institutionalized ways to address societies’ barriers to participation. We’ll be conducting research/focus groups this semester to better understand the issue and potential solutions!

CRUSH, Teviot’s first LGBT+ club night, continues this semester. I’ve been working on ways to restructure how it’s organized and marketed, bringing in local performers and (hopefully) hiring a student coordinator.

Next Steps

- Push for more research and the creation Strategic Plan at the Students’ Association for Postgraduate Engagement.
- Work with the PGT and PGR Reps on Semester 2 events for postgrads, including a potential Grad Ball for postgraduates.
- Follow-up on Students’ Association institutional responses to the lack of support for section groups’ social activities.
- Conduct research with societies on widening participation, with a view to a policy/systemic change to seed more inclusive practices in societies.
- Continue lobbying discussions on the future of the Participation Grant.

Other

- I’ve met with Trans Representatives from the Athena Swan committee and Staff Pride Network, with plans to present a paper to the University’s People Committee, giving suggestions to improving support/process for gender diverse students and staff.
- Esther (VPW) and myself are following up on the last Student Council’s motion on a Smoke-Free Policy. Esther is discussing the University’s policy with them, and I’m waiting on research on best practices for a student union’s policy. We’ll draft a policy and open it to student consultation.
- The Sabb Team is on Fresh Air! Tune in to our Sabb Sessions, held monthly (or fortnightly, if we can!) on Tues 6-7pm.
- I continue to sit on the Edinburgh Students’ Charities Appeal’s (ESCA) Trustee Board, who are holding RAG Week Feb 26th – Mar 4th, so feel free to give me thoughts!
- Sustain.Ed will be Feb 15th, check it out!
- Next month (Feb) is LGBT+ History Month – we’ve got some exciting events lined up, which I’m very excited for, and so you should be too!

3. Motions

i. Funding a Ticket to "Improving BAME Outcomes in Further and Higher Education" Conference (expenditure request)  
   Paper B

What we will do:

Fund a ticket for Diva Mukherji, the current BME officer and co-founder of LiberatEd, to attend the conference (£294).

"Join Holyrood as we examine the key barriers and challenges to improving BAME outcomes in further and higher education. We will consider what more can be done to tackle ethnicity-related disparities in access and outcomes - challenging our shortcomings and building on successes. At this event, we will examine what actions institutions can take to shape how BAME students access and engage with education, overall creating positive experiences, improving attainment and positive outcomes."

Background to this:

1. LiberatEd is a student-led initiative started in 2016 which aims to create a more intersectional and inclusive curriculum. It also challenges the lack of diversity in academic spaces, specifically in both the student body and academic staff.
2. In February 2017, student council passed a NUS Scotland Motion to lobby universities to be more inclusive of people of colour - through curriculum and representation in student body and academic staff

Beliefs and motivating actions:

1. This conference addresses the key barriers and challenges to improving BME outcomes in higher education.
2. It considers what a holistic institutional approach and response to BME issues in higher education may be, contextualizing it specifically within Scotland. This includes discussions around low attainment of BAME students (particularly relevant to
University of Edinburgh which has the lowest attainment of black students of any Russell Group university at 0.7%) and the BME attainment gap.

3. The conference is hosting speakers from various prominent groups, such as the Scottish Association of Minority Ethnic Educators, and would be essential in networking with individuals and organizations that are dedicated to these causes.

4. Most significantly it will provide action plans for institutions to deal with these situations, rather than just provide background to the situation.

Submitted with 20 Student Signatures.

ii. Improved Financial Support for Student Nurses (NUS Scotland)

Paper C

What we will do:

1. Mandate NUS to work with the Students Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS) to collect data on nursing applicants so that they are eligible for University bursaries and awards
2. Mandate NUS to lobby the Scottish Government to increase the Discretionary Fund for student nurses http://www.saas.gov.uk/_forms/disc_guidance_16_17.pdf

Background to this:

1. Student nurses who apply through SAAS are not eligible for any bursaries or awards at The University of Edinburgh as the institution has no data regarding their background
2. Student nurses who apply through Student Finance England (SFE) are eligible for awards and bursaries, which leads to discrepancies between students at the university, even though they’re receiving the same NHS bursary
3. The Discretionary Fund for student nurses currently allocates £5,000 to The University of Edinburgh, which was used by 3 students in 2016/17
4. A Scottish student with no children or dependents from a low-income background and living within a SIMD 20 (Scottish Indicator Multiple Deprivation) postcode would, if they lived outside of Edinburgh before starting their studies, be eligible for £5750 living costs loan from SAAS, £1875 Young Student Bursary from SAAS, £3000 Enhanced Scotland Scholarship from the University, if they were taking an undergraduate degree other than nursing (i.e. £10,625). A student in exactly the same circumstances undertaking a Nursing degree would only be eligible for a Nursing and Midwifery Student bursary of £6,578. And would ultimately have £4047 less available to them to spend on living expenses.

Beliefs and motivating actions:

Edinburgh University Students’ Association is a charity (SC015800) and a company limited by guarantee (SC429897) registered in Scotland. Registered Office: Potterrow, 5/2 Bristo Square, Edinburgh, EH8 9AL
1. The Scottish Government has mandated universities to expand their widening-participation student numbers so it’s important that students from these backgrounds can access the appropriate financial support for their attainment.

2. Student nurses often incur extra course costs due to the requirement of placements and the irregular hours worked, this makes it much harder for them to undertake paid employment than their non-nursing counterparts.

Submitted with 20 Student Signatures.

iii. Preventing unfair power of private halls (NUS Scotland)

Paper D

What we will do:

NUS to lobby the Scottish Government to introduce regulation of purpose built student accommodation (PBSA):

1. To require new developments of PBSA to include provision for affordable student housing amounting to 25% of the total.
2. To ensure PBSA providers reinvest a proportion of profit into student wellbeing and mental health.
3. Ensure PBSA prioritises student and community needs over greater profits.

Background to this:

1. PBSA has rapidly grown in recent years, taking more of the market share. They have private investors, so their greater capital means that can afford to buy property more than universities. They can also challenge planning permission more easily.
2. Current costs in Edinburgh for PBSA range from £105 p/w for a bunk bed room to £245 p/w for a studio with bathroom and kitchen (including bills). This is £5,355 to £12,495 per year based on a 51 week contract. PBSA offerings are heavily skewed to the expensive band. The maximum student support in Scotland this year is £7625. This is very unaffordable for students, particularly those from a disadvantaged background.
3. PBSA is exempt from the new Private Housing (Tenancies) (Scotland) Act 2016.
4. In some local authorities, e.g. Edinburgh, new housing developments must include 25% affordable, but PBSA is exempt from this legislation. so entire builds can have 200 beds all in the expensive category.

Beliefs and motivating actions:
1. It is a right, not a luxury, for students to have access to affordable housing.
2. As Universities start relying more on PBSA, private developers will be able to increase their price.
3. En-suite and studio rooms aren’t good for affordability or shared communal space. As PBSA is privately owned by investors, their only goal is to make money, and not to think about student wellbeing, unlike University student halls.
4. PBSA is using its huge capital to dominate the market, without regulation. This will create huge issues in the long term as uni’s enter long leases with them, so needs addressing now.

Submitted with 20 Student Signatures.

iv. Fight for Affordable Rent (NUS UK & Scotland)

**Paper E**

**What we will do:**

NUS Scotland Resolves:
1. To unite ‘Cut The Rent’ campaigns, tenants’ unions and students’ unions to launch a national campaign including a coordinated series of rent strikes across the country.
2. To fight for a maximum rent of £80 per week outside London and £100 in London.
3. To campaign for the reinstatement of housing benefit, the mass building of council houses and secure tenancies for students and young people.

**Background to this:**

Conference Notes:
1. An ever increasing number of students are struggling with extortionate rents that use up the majority of their maintenance loans and grants.
2. Students are ineligible to receive housing benefit because their maintenance support is supposed to cover their rent. However we know many students’ rent exceed their loans and grants.
3. There has been an upsurge of ‘Cut The Rent’ campaigns and tenants’ unions across the country in response to rising rents, precarious contracts and poor quality housing.
4. Direct actions, such as rent strikes, have been successful at winning hundreds of thousands of pounds of concessions at UCL and most recently Sussex. (a)

**Beliefs and motivating actions:**

1. The government’s decision to remove housing benefit from 18 to 21 year olds is callous and will lead to more homelessness. (b)
2. Everyone deserves housing “fit for human habitation”. Unfortunately this view is not shared by the UK government. (c)
3. Students are well placed to lead effective ‘Cut The Rent’ campaigns and win proper affordable rents.
4. Students are often at risk of revenge evictions or punitive annual rent increases and do not enjoy security of tenancy for the duration of their degree.

Citations:
(a) https://thetab.com/uk/sussex/2017/12/14/sussex-rent-strike-success-students-win-64000-compensations-24101#
(b) http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/housing-benefit-axed-18-21-year-olds-dwp-damian-green_uk_58b99db8e4b0d2821b4dca6e
(c) http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/tories-vote-down-law-requiring-landlords-make-their-homes-fit-for-human-habitation-a6809691.html

Submitted with 20 Student Signatures.

i. Supporting Picturehouse and McDonalds Strikes (NUS UK & Scotland)

This motion is subject to change.

What we will do:

Conference resolves:
1. To actively support workers in struggle, including publicising and mobilising for the Picturehouse and McDonald’s strikes, encouraging students to join picket lines, demonstrations and to support the strike fund.
2. To launch a campaign to unionise and organise student workers, from postgraduate lecturers and nursing students to those working in fast food, as part of a campaign for a £10 per hour minimum wage and to ban zero hour contracts.
3. To work with the labour movement in fighting for the right to strike and picket effectively, including for political reasons and in solidarity with other workers.
4. To encourage student unions to deny Picturehouse access to Freshers’ Fairs and other marketing opportunities until they concede their staff's demands.

Background to this:

Conference notes:
1. The Picturehouse and McDonald’s disputes which involve mainly young, low-paid workers on insecure contracts.
2. The September 2017 strikes at McDonald’s branches in Cambridge and Crayford for £10 an hour, secure contracts with guaranteed hours, and union recognition, as well as grievances over bullying from management.

3. This industrial action has already won pay rises for all McDonald’s workers and it will continue until their demands are met.*

4. That Picturehouse cinema workers are striking for the Living Wage, decent maternity and sick pay, and union recognition, as well as the reinstatement of four sacked union reps.


Beliefs and motivating actions:

Conference believes:

1. Many students have low paid jobs and zero hours contracts.
2. Joining a union, organising at work and going on strike is the most effective way to fight against inequality and for better pay and working conditions.
3. For these struggles to be effective, we must repeal all anti-trade union laws, including those introduced in the 1970s and 1980s, which make it harder for us to strike and picket effectively.
4. The National Living Wage should be replaced with a universal living wage of £10 per hour. This starts with supporting and spreading young workers’ struggles now.

Submitted with 20 Student Signatures.

ii. Solidarity with Iranian students and workers (NUS UK & Scotland)

Paper G

This motion is subject to change.

What we will do:

Conference resolves:

1. To make links with and build solidarity with the Iranian student and labour movement and left activists fighting for these goals.
2. To mandate NUS officers and other representatives of the NUS not to appear on Press TV, which is the English-language propaganda-outlet of the regime.

Background to this:
Conference notes:
1. The movement of protest in Iran which began in late December 2017, demanding basic freedoms, the release of political prisoners, lower prices and workers’ rights.
2. The violent repression that these protests suffered.

Beliefs and motivating actions:

Conference believes:
1. Student activists have raised slogans against all factions of the regime, for democracy, and for student-worker unity. We support their demands.
2. We also demand the immediate release of arrested student, labour movement and other political activists.
3. We stand in solidarity with those in Iran fighting for better living standards, for the right of workers and others to organise, for the release of political prisoners, for women’s rights, for a democratic republic and free elections. We oppose Western military threats and economic sanctions.

Submitted with 20 Student Signatures.

iii. Keep Fighting Climate Change! (NUS UK & Scotland)

Paper H

This motion is subject to change.

What we will do:

Conference resolves:
1. To affirm our commitment to campaigning for the nationalisation of the Big Six under democratic control as part of a renewed drive for student action on climate change.
2. To support protests and direct action against fossil fuel expansion, including the fight against fracking and a third runway at Heathrow, and in support of an accelerated renewable transition.

Background to this:

Conference notes:
1. The huge global warming and climate change already underway, as a result of human activity, is a grave threat to life, the planet and social progress.
2. Fossil fuel companies continue to stand in the way of serious action on climate change, and so must be confronted.
3. The current fossil fuel reserves are five times what could be burnt while staying under 2°C warming.
4. The government has intensified its drive for fracking, despite the dangers to the local environment, water supplies and the global climate.
5. Private ownership of the energy industry drives fuel poverty through profiteering and obstructs renewable energy development.
6. The profits of the Big Six energy companies (British Gas, EDF, E.ON, npower, Scottish Power and SSE) have risen tenfold since 2007.
7. NUS UK voted last year to “campaign for the nationalisation of the Big Six under democratic control”.

Beliefs and motivating actions:

Conference believes:
1. The need to confront the fossil fuel industry and energy companies cannot be avoided if we want to avoid catastrophic climate change.
2. The argument for a public, democratically controlled energy sector - to abolish fuel poverty and help fund a transition to renewable energy - is compelling.
3. Public ownership of energy will only be won by campaigning by grassroots worker, student, green and community groups.
4. The NUS was mandated to campaign for this, yet the most visible environmental campaign was to reduce the use of drinking straws in SU bars.
5. Grassroots campaigns like those against fracking in Lancashire and South East London and against Heathrow’s third runway, including direct action by groups like Reclaim the Power and Plane Stupid, are crucially important to fighting climate change. They are why fracking has been held off for so long, and we should join their campaign against the renewed drive towards fracking.

Submitted with 20 Student Signatures.

iv. Sustainable Growth in Student Numbers

Paper I

What we will do:

1. The Students’ Association to lobby the University to re-assess their strategy on expanding student numbers and to consider the current educational landscape and impact on existing students
2. The Students’ Association to advocate for improved financial investment in key student support services to keep in line with student numbers
3. Request that the Students’ Association is invited to work with the University to map out a strategic plan behind the growth of the university; to ensure that the experience of students is at the forefront
4. Mandate the Students’ Association to continue their collaboration with School Representatives to solicit feedback and to assess the impacts of expansion on students
5. Mandate the Students’ Association to work with online distance learners and the international community to represent their interests and requirements for support
6. Mandate the Students’ Association to advocate for more space for societies and to ensure that the increase in demand is being accounted for
7. Positively challenge the University to become a national leader in the recruitment and support of Widening Participation\(^2\) students

**Background to this:**

1. The University merged with Edinburgh College of Art (ECA) in 2011, 2,723 students (Edinburgh University Student Factsheet, 2011/12)

2. The University has expanded its student numbers by approx. 8,000 in the last 5 years (Edinburgh University Student Factsheets)
   - i. 16/17 39,576
   - ii. 15/16 37,416
   - iii. 14/15 35,258
   - iv. 13/14 33,110
   - v. 12/13 32,868
   - vi. 11/12 31,335

3. The University currently has 3000 online distance learners, with plans to expand this to 10,000 in near future

4. The University has recruited a larger proportion of its student body from an international market, rising from X to 41% in the last year

5. In the National Student Survey (NSS), the University is 90\(^{th}\) in the UK with 83% overall student satisfaction

6. The student experience has been impacted by;
   - Limited teaching space

\(^2\) Widening Participation is a term used to refer to students from a lower socioeconomic group, who’s status is determined by 5 different indicators defined by the University [https://www.ed.ac.uk/student-recruitment/widening-participation/about/what](https://www.ed.ac.uk/student-recruitment/widening-participation/about/what)
- There are 5 courses\(^3\) which have more students than the universities largest lecture theatre (George Square Lecture Theatre) can accommodate, which has resulted in double teaching. To combat the over-capacity, the University has been known to live stream the lecture to students who are unable to fit into the lecture hall, which provides a different quality of teaching.

- There are 39 courses which have more students than the universities two largest lecture theatres (GSLT and Appleton). This puts pressure on these venues and the available teaching space. There is still 4.1% of core teaching occurring on a Wednesday afternoon, which effects at least 2070 students. This goes against the University policy of “no teaching on Wednesday afternoons to allow time for extra-curricular activities”

- Due to the increase of staff and the limited space in the university estates, Postgraduate students have lost their permanent office space. This has resulted in the introduction of “hot desks” where students are to share their desks. However, due to the nature of the programmes, and uptake of tutoring and demonstrating, students are often reliant on the space at the same time which leads to unsatisfactory working conditions

  - Reduced examination period

- The revision period for Semester 1 is already reduced in comparison to Semester 2. This increases the pressures exerted on students, particularly those in Law and the College of Examinations where the curriculum is still heavily assessed via an exam. The University requires at least 11 days to schedule examinations in 2017 and due to the increase in student numbers and examinations this would be more in 2020/21. In 2020/21 there will only be 10 days available with 3 days for a revision period because of the way the academic year falls. As a result, due to the volume of examinations and lack of available space they are looking to outsource examinations by renting buildings across the city

  - Lack of University owned accommodation

- In previous years the university regularly relied on hotels and emergency accommodation to deal with overflow of incoming students

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\(^3\) Introduction to Linear Algebra (623), Calculus and it’s Applications (587), Sociology 1A (509), Sociology 1B (498), Political Thinkers (488).
The University has started long term contracts with private halls companies such as Unite, which is a much more expensive option for students. This has been justified by stating that the projected numbers from admissions are forcing the contracts, as the university cannot build housing quickly enough.

These rapid expansionary pressures are likely leading to worse deals for building leases and rental agreements due to the considerable pressure on the University to acquire under tight, reactionary time pressures making prices higher for students.

The price of accommodation, therefore, has been rising and started pricing out students from a widening-participation background. This is in tandem with the University’s drive to increase the number of International Students due to their fee status and, thus, greater propensity and ability to afford more expensive accommodation.

- Pressures on transport

  - The shuttle bus to Kings Buildings is regularly full and due to the limited capacity, students are left behind.
  - The Royal Infirmary to Western General Shuttle Bus ceased operations in 2016 for medical students.
  - The Veterinary School has limited evening return services and limited, if not no weekend services which has resulted in students walking.
  - Increased numbers put even more strain on these services, and whilst it is recognised that the University has made investments, this is not meeting the demand.
  - Increased housing pressures in central Edinburgh is leading to more students living afield which is a trend that will continue to grow as the University does. The University does not supplement the costs of travel for these students.

- Pressures on the Counselling and Disability services

  - Demand for student counselling has been steadily rising at universities nationwide, largely due to decreasing stigma around mental health and increasing financial, academic and other pressures on students. Rising demand, combined with a rise in total student numbers, can result in pressure on student services where they are not accompanied by corresponding rises in resources and physical space.
  - Students at the University have raised concerns in the past about the difficulty accessing both the Student Counselling Service and the Student Disability Service. Whilst the funding for the Counselling
Service has risen, the number of students accessing the service has also continued to rise.

- Steeper Competition between Societies for Limited Space
  - With more students, comes more student societies. We currently have just under 300 societies, one of the highest numbers in the UK, who already struggle to get access to adequate space for their activities. This can stifle potential society growth, and lead to dissatisfaction with the Students’ Association and the University.

- Lack of Community-Building Support for an Increasing International Student Population
  - Given the eviction of the student-run International Student Centre from their space on Buccleuch Street, and the general lack of community-building programming by the University for International Students, international students have not been given adequate attention in University services.

With a continued focus on recruiting more international students, any further expansion of student numbers ought to involve closer attention to the pastoral support of international students.

Beliefs and motivating actions:

1. Students at The University of Edinburgh deserve the highest quality education and student experience that can be offered. In promoting the University of Edinburgh to prospective students, the University claim that “You’ll experience the very best in teaching and research... Our flexible degree programmes, world-class facilities and award-winning support services combine to ensure your experience is exceptional and unique.”

2. The number of contacts hours are already limited for some degree-programmes. With the pressures of limited teaching space, staff resource and time this could become more reduced with more aspects being digitalised. For example, live streaming.

3. Expansion should be happening more naturally and incremental rather than all at once due to a reaction of under-investment over the years.

4. The current levels of construction on campus to deal with expanding student numbers can be disruptive to current students and have a negative impact on our experience.

5. Access and inclusion of support and services should be prioritised and equal regardless of a student’s mode of study. The level of access should not be diluted as the number of students increase.
Submitted with 20 Student Signatures.

v. Build more affordable student housing!

Paper J

What we will do:

1. Mandate the Students’ Association to ask for an increased percentage of student housing to be built by the University rather than outsourced to private companies
2. Ask the University to ensure that newly built student housing is accessible for those with disabilities

Background to this:

1. There have been a number of Students’ Association achievements around student accommodation already, including securing a price freeze on the cheapest thousand beds and a real terms price cut on first-year accommodation for the next academic year
2. Edinburgh is a particularly expensive city for students, being Scotland’s capital city and, in 2016, was declared the UK’s most costly student city.
3. Prices of first-year university accommodation have risen every year while the quality of accommodation has remained the same
4. There is a visible rise in new accommodation blocks being built by private companies such as Unite Students and Collegiate AC, which is leading towards an increased reliance on these unaccountable companies when the University can afford to build and buy its own accommodation
5. The University can afford to build more accommodation, due to the fact that the University’s profit last year was greater than every single university in Scotland’s combined
6. The University completed its Review of Support for Disabled Students in summer 2017, which found that disabled students viewed the support received as inconsistent

Beliefs and motivating actions:

1. One of the main issues for university students continues to be the increasing rise of living costs and accommodation fees, particularly those whose families are on lower incomes and cannot afford to help them with money
2. We believe that private companies do not have students’ best interests at heart, but rather the profit they can make. Reliance on private companies is unsustainable, more expensive and bad for students
3. The University has a responsibility to do what it can to ensure that new students are not struggling to afford to pay rent
4. The struggles of disabled students are often overlooked, and Edinburgh is already an extremely inaccessible city to live in. Accessibility should not come at a price, and accommodation should also be economically accessible.

Submitted with 20 Student Signatures.

vi. Mandates for NUS Delegates

Paper K

What we will do:

1. To mandate all delegates to NUS conferences to vote in accordance with EUSA policy upon motions where EUSA has policy
2. To excuse delegates from the above mandate on motions when their election statement has adopted a contradictory policy position
3. To require that the elected NUS delegates for each conference choose from amongst themselves one to act as the Delegation Leader
4. To mandate this Delegation Leader to ensure that all EUSA delegates are aware of the motions on which EUSA has policy and report to the Association Executive any delegates who break their mandates
5. To mandate the Association Executive to submit a motion of censure to Student Council against any delegate who breaks a mandate
6. To require that The Association be represented at any compositing meetings by the delegation leader or, failing that, an individual chosen by the Association Executive
7. To mandate the Returning Officer to insert into any future election statement of any delegate (who has been censured as above) a large red box informing the student body of such

Background to this:

1. That previous policy requiring delegates to NUS conferences to vote in-line with EUSA policy has lapsed
2. That the role of delegation leader is largely an administrative and welfare role, looking after first time delegates and ensuring delegates are aware of and follow mandates

Beliefs and motivating actions:

1. It is important that delegates are able to represent the views of the students who elected them
2. While delegates are elected in campus wide elections their manifestos cannot cover every possible motion likely to be brought to a conference
3. That how delegates vote and behave at conference represents the students who voted for them and therefore there should be democratic oversight over how they vote.

4. That it is important that the role of Delegation Leader is carried out.

5. That we should send as many delegates as possible to NUS UK and NUS Scotland conferences to ensure that the views of our members are advocated as best they can be.

Submitted with 20 Student Signatures.

4. Upcoming Events

12-18 February
Sexcetera
## Student Council Expenditure Tracker

*June 2017 - May 2018*

Responsible: sabbatical officers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date approved at Student Council</th>
<th>Allocated budget</th>
<th>Spent to date</th>
<th>Remaining</th>
<th>Lead contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ERCC</td>
<td>26th Oct</td>
<td>£75</td>
<td>£75.00</td>
<td>£3,925.00</td>
<td>Kathryn Pearson</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Totals      | £75.00                           | £75.00           | £3,925.00    |           |                    |

Total unallocated budget

£3,925.00