Student Council
Thursday 15 February 2018, 6 – 8 pm, Teviot Dining Room

AGENDA

1. Welcome

2. Accountability
   Paper A

3. Motions
   i. Support for UCU Strike
      Paper B
   ii. NUS delegation leaders and policy mandates
      Paper C
   iii. A ban on the sale of bottled water, plastic bags and all other single-use plastics from Students' Association-run cafes, bars and shops
      Paper D

4. NUS Scotland Delegate Election

5. Students' Association's Affiliations
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>
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<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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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

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

**VP Welfare: Esther Dominy**

For meeting of 15/02/2018

**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**

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<tr>
<th>Summary</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Council has previously passed policy around improving the</td>
<td>University’s Special Circumstances and Extensions policies to make</td>
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<tr>
<td>University’s Special Circumstances and Extensions policies to make</td>
<td>them more accessible – including to student parents and carers –</td>
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<tr>
<td>them more accessible – including to student parents and carers –</td>
<td>and improving this system is one of my priorities for the year.</td>
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<td>The University is currently looking at how to improve the process</td>
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<td>of applying for Special Circumstances and Extensions to make it</td>
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<td>applying for Special Circumstances and Extensions to make it easier</td>
<td>easier to use, fairer and more consistent and I am also working to</td>
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<td>to use, fairer and more consistent and I am also working to make</td>
<td>make changes to academic policies for Special Circumstances and</td>
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<td>make changes to academic policies for Special Circumstances and</td>
<td>Extensions, amending them to cover a broader range of circumstances</td>
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<td>Extensions, amending them to cover a broader range of circumstances</td>
<td>with more appropriate evidence requirements.</td>
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<td>with more appropriate evidence requirements.</td>
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<th>Actions</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Attended Curriculum and Student Progression Committee (CSPC)</td>
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<td>(CSPC) alongside VP Education to support the addition of non-</td>
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<td>routine parental and caring responsibilities to Special</td>
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Circumstances and Extensions policies. This was approved and will be updated for the 2018/19 academic year!

- At CSPC supported the addition of exceptional and unanticipated employment commitments to the Extensions policy. This has now been approved and will be updated for 2018/19.
- Developed a proposal to add ‘experience of sexual assault or harassment’ to Special Circumstances and Extensions policies and to amend evidence requirements to give greater weight to statements given by staff members who have received disclosures. CSPC approved in late January, subject to a further amendment to list experience of harassment separately to sexual harassment or assault. The full change will be approved in March, for 2018/19.
- 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.
- 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 am 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.
- Working with the University to explore options for providing template wording around Special Circs/Extensions.

### Sexual violence and harassment policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary</th>
<th>I have been working to improve 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 disclosure or report to the University.</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Actions | • Work with the University and Advice Place staff to map out problems with University policies and processes has now concluded and there are now plans to open this to external stakeholders (including Rape Crisis organisations and Police Scotland), relevant student reps (Liberation Officers and society office-bearers) and student survivors. I am also compiling a paper to outline our key concerns and priorities for what should change.  

• I am pushing for a strategy group to be set up to take responsibility for this work, oversee the writing of a University-wide strategy on tackling sexual violence and harassment and ultimately ensure implementation of changes.  

• I have met with students and University representatives to allow students to communicate their concerns directly and am working with our Women’s Officer, Kathryn Pearson, to |
develop ideas for consultation with student survivors to take place later this semester.

- Staff-student sexual misconduct has been highlighted as an issue by the National Union of Students (NUS) and I have promoted 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 – a draft policy is likely to be written up soon for me to provide feedback.

- I have been lobbying for changes to the University’s complaints form – this is currently the only way to report sexual violence to the University and is not fit for purpose. Myself and the Advice Place Manager have communicated changes to be made and I am following this up.

- 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. We are currently looking at developing our communications around 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. A bonus is that the booklets have been cheaper to produce than expected, so we’ll receive 200!
### Next Steps

- Now that mapping work 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.
- Developing communications around our Zero Tolerance approach in venues.
- Working with Kathryn to plan and run a consultation with student survivors on reporting mechanisms in March.
- Continuing to push for changes to be made throughout the University based on the issues identified during the mapping process (including staff training, HR investigations, investigations under the Code of Student Conduct, complaints, policy gaps, etc.).

### No One Asks For It and bystander training

#### 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, with a focus on survivor support alongside prevention and education and with more opportunities for student involvement. We are also looking at expanding the training available at the University on bystander intervention.

#### Actions

- Attended a 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. This feedback was written up and will be used to develop the next campaign.
### 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.

- Met with Kathryn and Students’ Association staff to develop our proposals for a new campaign. Kathryn and I will present this to the University in late February or March.

- Met with the University to discuss plans to train around 600 student leaders in bystander intervention this September, feeding in our priorities for training and what this should look like (both for this September as well as long-term plans for training on a larger scale).

### Next Steps

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

- Presenting our proposals for a new campaign to the University; once we are agreed on how the campaign will move forward we can begin to plan the specifics.

- Working to identify student groups to receive the bystander training due to be delivered in September.

### Thematic Review of Support for Mature Students and Student Parents and Carers

### Summary

Last year, the University committed to conducting a Thematic Review into support for mature students and student parents and carers. This will take place over semester 2 and will involve consultation with students to identify recommendations for improvements.
### Actions

- Attended the first meeting of the Thematic Review, where I raised issues affecting mature students and student parents and carers, including library access, childcare, data collection, information/guidance, academic policies and changing facilities among other issues.
- Successfully lobbied for the Students’ Association reps for Parents, Carers and Mature Students to be invited to sit on the panel conducting the review. The next meeting of the review will take place with our reps in late February.
- Worked to secure further opportunities for students to feed in through focus groups and interviews – these will take place in early March.

### Next Steps

- Continuing to shape the outcomes of the review alongside our reps for Parents, Carers and Mature Students by feeding in students’ concerns.
- Working with the University to set-up and promote focus groups and interviews.

### Other

- Myself, the President and VP Community, our Disabled Students’ Officer Chloë Marvin and Judith Drake 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 pleased to say the plan has been approved with additional funding for several more rooms!
- I am involved in preliminary conversations around Mental Health Peer Support and am working with Students’ Association and University staff to develop ideas for a pilot scheme to run later this year.
- Beginning to plan for Mental Health and Wellbeing Week 2018 and have started conversations with the University around support and funding.
- I met with Lindsay Moffat, our Student Parents Rep, and the VP Activities and Services to explore options for a child-friendly space in Teviot.
Vice President Education: Bobi Archer

For meeting of 15/02/2018

Summary

In the past 3 weeks I’ve dedicated most of my time to the Lecture Recording Consultation and the UCU Strike. I’ve been producing promotional material for the consultation as well as doing outreach on satellite campus’ to engage with students to get a high turnout. Ensuring that we get good student engagement will give me good data to support the student requirement for consistent usage. In regards to the UCU Strikes I’ve been meeting with the UCU and University to ensure students are as up to date as possible regarding the action that will take place. This has been facilitated through our social media channels as well as replying to individual student enquiries. In what little time I’ve had outwit this, I’ve now also met with 19/21 schools regarding my proposals for the Programme Representative system.

UCU Strike Support

Summary

On Monday the 22\textsuperscript{nd} of January, the University and College Union (UCU) voted in favour of 14 days of strike action to protest against the proposed changes to the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) pension scheme, which the majority of the University staff are enrolled in. The UCU are also using this strike as a platform to demonstrate the additional work that staff are required to do without pay. In the lead up to this, the Students’ Association has been liaising with the UCU and the University to ensure that this has a minimal effect to a student’s academia and welfare.

The dates of the strike are as follows;

- Week 1: 26\textsuperscript{th}, 27\textsuperscript{th} and 28\textsuperscript{th} of February
- Week 2: 5\textsuperscript{th}, 6\textsuperscript{th}, 7\textsuperscript{th} and 8\textsuperscript{th} of March
- Week 3: 12\textsuperscript{th}, 13\textsuperscript{th} 14\textsuperscript{th}, 15\textsuperscript{th} and 16\textsuperscript{th} of March
- Week 4: 19\textsuperscript{th} and 20\textsuperscript{th} of March

Actions/Updates

- The Students’ Association currently has live policy to support UCU strikes
• The Students’ Association services will be in operation as normal, although we plan to provide a platform for UCU members who are marking assessments

• Arranging internal meetings with the Sabbatical Officers and Students’ Association staff to communicate to students strike protocol and how to support the strike action. So far we have;
  ➢ Released an article to inform students of the strike
  ➢ Produced a set of FAQ’s for students
  ➢ Directing student complaints to the University Principal and central management team

• I’ve been meeting with the UCU on a weekly basis to stay informed of their proposed action and to encourage them to minimize the impact on students. We have requested that the Library is not to be picketed so students can study independently and access the counselling and disability service as normal.

• Also meeting with the University to ensure that the strike action does not have an impact on a student’s academic standing or welfare. So far negotiated:
  ➢ Teaching will not be re-arranged for the end of Week 11 as this goes against the ethos of the strike. Additionally, students have already made holiday arrangements and this will significantly reduce the revision period. However, there may be exceptions for degrees which have professional requirements
  ➢ In-person assignment deadlines will be postponed to the next non-strike day and online assessments will remain the same. Students can still apply for extensions, which we would recommend if the tutor is unavailable etc.
  ➢ Students will not be examined on material that they have not been taught, therefore the appropriate adjustments will need to be made
  ➢ Boards of Examiners will take the strike into consideration and therefore students do not individually need to apply for Special Circumstances. However, if a student does not agree with their grade they can appeal
<table>
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<th>Next Steps</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Currently producing a video to inform students of strike protocol and</td>
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<tr>
<td>what to expect, as well as explaining the ways they can help to support</td>
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<tr>
<td>with this specific strike</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Continue to meet with the University; where we’ll be lobbying for a</td>
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<td>partial refund of tuition fees</td>
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<td>• Request that Schools signpost students to the correct place if any</td>
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<td>academics/admin or support staff are on strike, and with as much notice</td>
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<tr>
<td>as possible</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Continue to update students of plans and information as we liaise with</td>
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<tr>
<td>the UCU and University</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Plan the logistics of supporting the UCU with their action, such as</td>
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<td>booking space, teas and coffees etc.</td>
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**Lecture Recording Policy Consultation**

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<tr>
<td>The University made an investment into new equipment to facilitate lecture recording. They</td>
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<td>scoped that this project would take 3 years to fit all university rooms with the equipment,</td>
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<tr>
<td>with the first phase rolled out for 2017/18. The University did not have a current policy in</td>
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<tr>
<td>place to decide how the equipment would be utilized and has been left for academics to decide.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Due to the inconsistent usage of the equipment, I’ve been lobbying the University to</td>
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<tr>
<td>implement an opt-out policy which will ensure that all lectures are automatically recorded</td>
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<td>unless there is a legitimate reason as not to.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Actions/ Updates</th>
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<tr>
<td>• I’ve been attending bi-weekly meetings to discuss the progress of the roll-out and</td>
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<tr>
<td>to help create an opt-out policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Organized for there to be a consultation on the policy with students so there</td>
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<tr>
<td>is evidence to lobby for a consistent usage of the lecture recording equipment</td>
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</table>
Created promotional material and drafted Students’ Association communications to ensure students are aware of the consultation

Liaised with School Representatives to ensure that they’re aware of the consultation and for them to collect feedback from their constituencies

Led an outreach event at Easter Bush as well as providing other outreach events with promotional material so students on satellite campus’ have the ability to ask questions about the consultation

Next Steps

Continue to promote the lecture recording consultation through Student Representatives, the Students’ Association channels and outreach events

Gather direct feedback from our Liberation Officers and Section Representatives to ensure that we can emphasize the benefits for particular cohorts of students; for example, disabled students, parents and carers.

Compile a response on behalf of the student body to request an opt-out policy for the 2018/19 academic year

Other

Continuing to work with the University to secure funding for student nurses through the Alumni and Development department. Also will now be presenting the motion at the NUS Scotland conference now that it has passed.

Promoting the lecture recording policy to students to ensure that we get a diverse range of perspectives in favour of consistent usage. This is important in lobbying the University for an opt-out Policy, to ensure that all students are given equal access to educational material. The deadline for this is Monday 19th February and can be done through your School Representative or directly to the Educational Technology Policy Officer, Neil.McCormick@ed.ac.uk and the link is: http://bit.ly/LectureRecordingConsultation

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
President: Patrick Kilduff

For meeting of 15/02/2018

Summary

It’s an exciting time with the preparation for Elections ‘18 well under way as well as many other projects, some of which are outlined below. We’ve been working on a number of projects both individually and as a team; working with the VP Community we’re honing in on securing a ten-year residential strategy with student accessibility and affordability at its heart to continuing to tackle issues of expansion with the University especially with the new Principal (Noting his statement in an interview with The Student Newspaper “My principle would be to say, ‘let’s get our house in order as best we can with our current size before we think about expanding,’ because I think there’s work to be done. I wouldn’t want to carry on expanding without paying attention to the experience we’re providing at the moment.”. By the next Council our elections will have been held so it’s a truly exciting time of year; make sure you and your pals vote, take part, ask questions of candidates and, most importantly, if you’re running, GOOD LUCK!

Principal’s Town Hall Update

Summary

Following the announcement of strike action dates and conversations with the UCU regarding the appropriateness of dates for the Town Hall with the Principal. As a result of these conversations we have decided to reschedule the Town Hall to the next most appropriate date which is provisionally Wednesday 28th March; it will take place with the same format and at the same time of 6PM – 8PM at McEwan Hall with free food and drink.

Actions

- We want to make sure we are not putting anyone, either staff or students, at a disadvantage by holding this event during a day of major industrial action.
- We have made the decision to make sure the event has as good an attendance as possible, so students do not have to cross picket lines to attend whilst maintaining our drive to ensure our voice is key to shaping the Principal’s vision as early as possible.
### Next Steps

- The Principal will continue to make rounds of School Councils and groups by recommendation of the Sabbatical team.
- Myself and other sabs have a meeting with the Principal in the coming week as well as some more in the near future; if you have anything you would like us to raise specifically let us know at council or email me at [eusapres@ed.ac.uk](mailto:eusapres@ed.ac.uk).

### Students’ Association Elections

#### Summary

It’s amazing that it’s been a year since last year’s elections but it is an extremely exciting time coming up. Preparations are well under way for the elections, nominations have been open since November but the deadline is the 22nd February at 5:00PM. There are a brilliant multitude of positions; liberation officers (BME, LGBT+, Women’s and Disabled Students), undergraduate School Representatives, full-time sabbatical positions, activities representatives and section representatives. These are all extremely fulfilling roles to take part in where your voice makes a real impact and creates real change for students in your school or across the University.

If you have any questions feel free to come talk to me or email me at [eusapres@ed.ac.uk](mailto:eusapres@ed.ac.uk). We have several candidates briefing sessions to help inform candidates of campaign tips and tricks as well as making sure you know you’re supported.

If you’re running or thinking about running and just want some support or advice I’m also free whenever to chat!

#### Actions

- Getting excited to see a whole host of fantastic candidates from across the University standing to make real change and positive impact.
- Give a good read of peoples manifestos.
Keep an eye out for the announcement of hustling dates for Sabbatical Officers.

- Encouraging as many people as possible to vote and take part and make their voice heard in an equally important way even if standing for elected office doesn’t quite float your goat.

Next Steps

- VOTE
- VOTE
- VOTE

Other

- Working to get a constitutional amendment to the University Estate’s profile to make sure on all student facing projects there is a requirement to have a student on the board.
- Worked with the brilliant VP Activities and Services and the fabulous Sports Union President to disseminate the second tranche of funds from the Participation Grant as well as securing £25k per year for the next three years of the grant (2.5x more than where we were at the start of the year – Go Kai!!)
- Working with postgraduate representatives, the VP Activities & Services and Vice-President Community on developing plans around the new Postgraduate Centre at Old Kirk on Holyrood
- Working with the VP Welfare, Disabled Students Officer Chloë Marvin, Judith Drake and the VP Community in the development of the Wellbeing Centre at 7 Bristo Square
- Working with the VP Activities and Services to continue to develop more detailed plans regarding the Student Centre.
- Attempting to meet with rectorial candidates to discuss Students’ Association and student priorities. Elections of the Rector will be taking place very soon and I am involved in the planning around the elections as well as wanting to update on why this is such an important position for students to have our say, make our voice heard and vote.

VP Community: Oliver Glick

For meeting of 15/02/2018

Summary
We got the Big’un folks- full divestment from the university. A lot of campaigning over the years, big ups to People and planet, other students and student groups, and previous sabs.

Thanks to all who voted for my Private halls motion- I’ll be taking it with gusto to NUS Scotland. I’ve also been meeting Councillors and msp’s on the matter recently.

Good progress on better cycling and bike storage on campus

**Housing**

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<tr>
<th>Summary</th>
<th>affordable housing, more co-ops, better tenant’s rights</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Actions | - I met with and lobbied MSP’s, who have agreed to circulate my private housing motion to the right people at Holyrood  
- Myself and Patrick were consulted on the idea of new properties that are uni owned halls, but further out of the center. We gave our feedback on the importance of affordability and good transport for students should this be the only option for non-private halls going forward  
- The housing fair was a success! Great to see the alternate accommodation stalls, such as the housing co-op, getting good rep  
- We met with uni reps to discuss the best combined strategy to prevent scams and dodgy landlords  
- Patrick and I met with key architects of the new residential strategy to push for student needs on affordability, anti pbsa, and co ops |
| Next Steps | - Meet with planning conveners at council on pbsa  
- Gain student feedback on whether cheaper halls, that have to be slightly further out of the center, is a good thing |

**Sustainability**
Summary

Save the planet...
Focus on food waste, divestment and reinvestment, good food

Actions

- Full divestment was achieved— the uni announced after court passed the paper. This is great for students seeing a sustainable university, and validates this association and its members efforts over the years
- Georgia, our food waste intern, has started! She will be working on developing a redistribution system, and wasting less food at the creation stage
- Feedback from myself and Kai’s coffee cup proposal was very positive—we are now having a follow up meet with the uni for details
- We have been busy organizing sustained! Food edition— it will have happened the day of this very meeting, and is enabling student groups to run their own events, as well as a big sustainable farmers market!

Next Steps

- Finalise keep cup and reverse coffee tax plan
- Support food waste work towards a distribution pilot
- Ensure the university divests in its given time frame

Transport

- I am being consulted on a potential new bike hire scheme involving the university, so watch this space. Of course I’m striving to ensure its best for students!
- We will be reviewing the results of the big transport survey with estates— we will be lobbying for increased help for all campuses through buses, and better bike lanes
- I met with the travel focus group— I fed back student request for more bike storage, and the university are on the same page, and are undertaking a big appraisal of central and Kings, to best build bike storage students want
Vice President Activities & Services: Kai O’Doherty

For meeting of 15/02/2018

Summary

With only two weeks between Council and writing this report, there’s not too much new to add – but you can find a few key points below! I largely want to highlight one success and one...less-than-success, regarding gender-neutral toilets and access to University rooms for societies, respectively. Work on encouraging reusable cup use is also going well!

Improving our Commercial Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary</th>
<th>With a new Commercial Director having started, I’m working to incorporate student feedback in the strategic direction of our services.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Actions | • Food waste: we’ve officially hired an intern to investigate causes and solutions to food waste in our commercial outlets, to investigate potentials for reduction and redistribution.  
• Reducing use of disposable coffee cups: Ollie (VPC) and I presented a paper to the University’s Social Responsibility & Sustainability Committee, proposing a ‘latte levy’, which has been shown to increase use of reusable cups. This was met with positive response, and we’ll be working to implement this at our outlets and the University’s.  
• I had a stall at JCM at King’s Building for an afternoon to gain student feedback on the Students’ Association, a lot of which revolved around our services. This will all be fed in to the strategic plan of services, or quick changes made where possible. |
• Esther (VPW) and I met with the Parents’ Rep to explore potential space in Students’ Association venues to be child-friendly for student parents. We’ll be investigating this further.
• The new Trustee Board sub-committee I chair, Strategic Development, will include student-led ‘insight groups’ as part of its feedback structure. At the final Trading Committee meeting, we discussed potential insight groups, including King’s Buildings, catering, sustainability, and more. Stay tuned for what these groups will look like, and how to get involved in shaping your services!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Next Steps</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Work with the Food Waste Intern in their research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Meet with relevant stakeholders regarding the reusable cup proposal, and seek funding for this.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Secure Teviot space for student-parents.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Gender-Neutral Toilets**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary</th>
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<tr>
<td>A frequent element of my updates, a big milestone has been reached in the campaign to increase the provision of gender-neutral toilets across campus has been reached – so let’s celebrate!</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• I’ve presented a full report to the Head of Estates at the University, who has assigned a project manager to officially review existing buildings to implement gender-neutral toilet options, including those identified in the student-led audit!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Having a University agree to implement gender-neutral loos in existing and future builds is a great success, unparalleled with anywhere else! Yay!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Next Steps</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Follow-up with Estates on the progress of gender-neutral toilet signage and provision.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Continue to encourage students to audit/report potential convertible toilets across campus.

Activities-related Projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary</th>
<th>My main Activities-related campaigns have related to broadening access to activities, and encouraging inter-society collaboration.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Actions | • As announced at last Student Council, but not part of the report due to timings, the Activities & Sports Participation Grant has been successfully increased from £10,000 to £25,000 per year for at least three years! Ways to monitor and evaluate success in order to maintain this funding have been planned, and will be implemented before the end of the semester.  
• Applications for the Activities & Sports Participation Grant for Semester 2 have been reviewed, and funds will be shortly disseminated.  
• Access to University Rooms for Societies: following months of compiling research and paper proposals for University Estates to argue the worth of societies and their need for more bookable spaces, I met with the Head of Estates to plead our case. However, as happens sometimes in this job, I was unsuccessful – largely due to the University's current project to reduce the number of University rooms open after 5pm, diametrically opposing my goal. I’m sorry, folks!  
• A lot of time this month is being spent reviewing the almost 900 nominations we’ve received for the Activities Awards! This has almost doubled nomination numbers from previous years, which is great! |
Next Steps

- Conduct evaluation interviews on the Participation Grant to elicit feedback on its impact, to continue to secure this funding for years to come.
- Plans to conduct research with societies on widening participation, with a view to a policy/systemic change to seed more inclusive practices in societies.

3. Motions

i. Support for UCU Strike

Paper B

What we will do:

1. In solidarity, the Students’ Association shall support the University and College Union (UCU) in their campaign against the proposed changes to the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) pension scheme.
2. Explain to students why teaching and support staff have decided to take such significant action
3. Encourage students not to cross picket lines. Encourage students to join staff picket lines.
4. Provide information and guidance to students about the ways they can support the strike
5. Work with the University to ensure that strike action will have a minimal effect on students’ academic experience, by, but not limited to negotiating the postponement of deadline
6. To not work with the University to organise alternative forms of teaching to cover classes that are cancelled due to strike action
7. To use Teviot Row House and other Students’ Association buildings where appropriate to host UCU members taking industrial actions for actions such as meetings and refreshments
8. To encourage our members who are also eligible to join the UCU to become members
9. To lobby the University senior management to put pressure on Universities UK (UUK) to negotiate with UCU

Background to this:
1. On Monday 22 January 2018, the UCU, which is the largest University Staff Union in the UK, voted in favour of 14 days of strike action to protest against proposed changes to the Universities Superannuation Scheme pension scheme, which the majority of University staff are enrolled in.

2. The USS proposals will end guaranteed pension benefits, making final pensions depend on investment performance rather than workers’ contributions.

3. That University of Edinburgh UCU members voted 87.6% in favour and 12.4% against taking industrial action. Nationally, 88% of UCU members who voted backed strike action and 93% backed action short of a strike. The turnout was over 58%.

4. That UCU members at 60 other Universities in the UK, including The Open, Cambridge, Manchester, Leeds and St Andrew’s have also voted for, and will be taking industrial action.

5. That the proposed pension changes also impact on PGR students who are also members of the Students’ Association

6. UCU have consistently supported student campaigns and actions. (c)

7. NUS Conference has previously voted that our default position as students should be to back industrial action by education workers, because we understand that working conditions and teaching quality are so closely tied, and because we understand that the alliance of solidarity between students and education workers is vital to our own campaigns.

Beliefs and motivating actions:

1. That the current dispute centres on UUK’s proposals to end the defined benefit element of the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) pension scheme.

2. This could leave a typical lecturer almost £10,000 a year worse off in retirement than under the current set-up

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2. [https://www.ucu.org.uk/strikeforuss](https://www.ucu.org.uk/strikeforuss)


4. [https://www.ucu.org.uk/boycott-the-nss](https://www.ucu.org.uk/boycott-the-nss)

5. [https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/9173/USS-strike-leaflet/pdf/USS_Strike_A5_flyer_Jan18.pdf](https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/9173/USS-strike-leaflet/pdf/USS_Strike_A5_flyer_Jan18.pdf)
3. One of the greatest elements of trade unionism is the power to take collective action and protect the rights of employees. Student-worker solidarity can play an integral part in this.
4. That strike action is a legitimate campaigning tactic
5. That if we do not support industrial action protecting UCU members’ pensions, other pension schemes will look to reduce benefits meaning all future graduates will be negatively impacted
6. The new Principal has recently been awarded a significant financial reward package compared to the outgoing Principal including around £42,000 cash in lieu of pension contributions
7. Alongside students, staff are one of the greatest assets of any university - without teachers there cannot be students - and they are angry at efforts to slash their pensions
8. Staff members feel let down by University senior managers for not standing up to protect their pension at a time when across the Higher Education sector, University Principal and Vice-Chancellors pay and additional financial perks are at an all-time high.
9. Threats to staff working conditions are part of a wider picture of cuts to education funding and marketisation.

Submitted with 20 Student signatures.

ii. NUS delegation leaders and policy mandates

Paper C

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, who acts to look out for the welfare and safeguarding of delegates as well as ensuring clear communication for the effective operation of the delegation at conference
4. To mandate this Delegation Leader to ensure that all EUSA delegates are aware of the motions on which EUSA has policy
5. 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

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 mandate
3. Both policy mandates and the role of delegation leader have worked exactly as intended as existing EUSA policy for the last four years, without complaint

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 - it would be detrimental to delegate welfare and delegation coordination if there was no-one in a position to assist delegates in a new, confusing and potentially overwhelming environment
5. That it is important that policy mandates carried out - it would be detrimental to student-led deliberative democracy, engagement with The Association, and a total destruction of the long-standing democratic link between Student Council and NUS conference to not advocate for our policy within NUS
6. 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.

iii. A ban on the sale of bottled water, plastic bags and all other single-use plastics from Students’ Association-run cafes, bars and shops (see amendment below)

Paper D

What we will do:

1. Ban the sale of all bottled water from Students’ Association-run outlets. The Students’ Association will replace these by increasing the number of water fountains, increasing the sale of re-usable water bottles and improving signage as to where bottles can be refilled.
2. Ban plastic carrier bags and replace them with paper bags and re-usable cotton bags.
3. Ban the use of other single-use plastics, for example, straws and plastic cups from bars.

Background to this:

Plastic waste is a huge environmental problem:

1. Due to recent coverage, particularly in David Attenborough’s Blue Planet 2, the issue of the environmental impact of plastics is currently very much in the public eye. The problem with plastic waste was also briefly mentioned in the Government’s autumn budget.
2. 8.3bn tonnes of plastic have been produced to date and, as of 2015, 6.3bn tonnes of that is waste (Geyer, Jambeck, & Law, 2017).
3. 79% of the 6.3bn tonnes is accumulating in landfill or the natural environment (Geyer, Jambeck, & Law, 2017).
4. 20,000 bottles are bought every second, less than 50% are recycled and of that figure, only 7% become new bottles (Laville & Taylor, 2017).
5. It takes hundreds of years for bottles to degrade (Matar, 2011).
6. It is a danger to marine life. Fish ingest plastic particulates which build up, killing the fish. Humans eat the fish with high levels of plastic, the consequences of which are still unknown.
7. The Students’ Association sells 80,000 bottles of water a year, many of which end up in landfill.
8. It takes 3 litres of water to produce 1 litre of bottled water (“Bottled Water and Energy Fact Sheet - Pacific Institute,” 2007).
9. If a bottle is filled to a quarter of its capacity, that is the amount of oil used to produce it (“Bottled Water and Energy Fact Sheet - Pacific Institute,” 2007).

Beliefs and motivating actions:

1. In 2008, students from the University of Leeds voted overwhelmingly to ban the sale of bottled water from all the university union-run outlets. In 2007/2008 they sold 180,698 bottles, which means after the ban, 146,365 fewer plastic bottles went to landfill. As well as the University of Leeds many American universities have implemented a ban on bottled water on their campuses.
2. The University of Edinburgh strives to be a world leader in addressing sustainability issues. Banning single-use plastic would put the university at the forefront of the fight to reduce plastic pollution and become only the third university in the UK to take action against a growing environmental problem. It is a move that would be in line with the university’s Zero by 2040 commitment.
3. The Students’ Association notes on its website that ‘Britain’s present level of resource consumption and the related environmental impact could not be sustained, if applied to all countries of the world.’ A potential ban on single-use plastics and bottled water
is a step that can feasibly be taken that would have a significant effect at a local level as well as providing an example to other student unions.

4. With this issue currently in the public eye, having been highlighted on BBC One’s Blue Planet 2 & mentioned in the autumn budget, now is the time to push for change.

Submitted with 20 Student signatures.

Amendments:

- What will we do? DELETE 2. REPLACE with, ‘Phase out the use of plastic carrier bags and explore bio-degradable plant based alternatives that are not paper bags, as well as bags for life such as re-usable cotton bags.’
- What will we do? ADD on to the end of 3. ‘if they cannot be easily replaced by bio-degradable alternatives.’
- What is the background to this? ADD new clause, ‘Notes that paper bags are not an adequate replacement due to both the Scottish climate and more importantly that they are four times more resource intensive to produce, aid in the destruction of forests and the wider eco-system, displace indigenous communities and are generally not as re-usable as plastics. (WRAP, government agency for reducing waste, and EPA) Additionally it does not degrade much faster than plastics (EPA).

4. NUS Scotland Delegate Election

As we have one vacant NUS Scotland delegate place to fill, which must meet the NUS Scotland requirement for 50% of the conference delegates to be women, we accepted nominations for the position by email. We will be electing the NUS Scotland Delegate at this Student Council meeting.

5. Students’ Association’s Affiliations

There is a need under the Education Act 1994 to review all ongoing affiliations each year. The Students’ Association’s agreed process for undertaking this review is that Student Council (as a meeting open to members) and the Trustee Board jointly review the affiliations annually. Details of affiliations to follow.

- Conflict-free Campus Initiative
- Stop Climate Chaos
- National Campaign Against Fees and Cuts
- Votes at 16
- Right to Education Campaign/Friends of Birzeit University
- National Union of Students
### Student Council Expenditure Tracker

**June 2017 - May 2018**

<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>Total at June 2017</td>
<td></td>
<td>£ 4,000.00</td>
<td>£ 4,000.00</td>
<td>£ 4,000.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<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>
<tr>
<td>BAME Conference</td>
<td>25th Jan</td>
<td>£119.00</td>
<td>£119.00</td>
<td>£3,806.00</td>
<td>Diva Mukherji</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>£194.00</td>
<td>£194.00</td>
<td>£3,806.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total unallocated budget</td>
<td></td>
<td>£3,806.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>