

## Accountability

### Report from Jess Husbands, Vice President (Societies & Activities)

#### Disability Review

Summary	In April students called for the University to conduct a review into the support for disabled students on campus. This review has now concluded the interview-style sessions with a range of university students and staff, and the findings and recommendations will be presented at University Senate on Weds 1 <sup>st</sup> Feb.
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Have sat on all sessions of the review, continually stressed the need for student feedback and made surveys to facilitate student input if they could not attend the sessions.</li><li>• Got a commitment to deal with accessibility issues in the short term, as well as long term change.</li><li>• Prepared a presentation of the recommendations to present at Senate</li><li>• Got a commitment from the staff leads on the review (Jane Norman, VP People and Culture; and Gavin Douglas, Deputy Secretary Student Experience) to hold a student consultation on the review in mid to late February. Am liaising with the Disability and Mental Wellbeing Group to arrange the best time for this.</li></ul>
Next steps:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Present at Senate</li><li>• Coordinate student consultation</li><li>• Ensure steps are put in place to ensure implementation of recommendations are consistent across the University.</li></ul>

#### Mental Health and Wellbeing Week woop

Summary	In 2015 it was voted at Student Council that we should hold a week of events around mental health. Mental Health and Wellbeing Week was initiated last year by Andy Peel, and the accompanying #letstalk campaign won Herald Higher Education Campaign of the Year.
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mental Health and Wellbeing Week 2017 runs 30<sup>th</sup> Jan – 5<sup>th</sup> Feb, with a vast range of events. Full schedule at <a href="https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/representation/campaigns/welfare/letstalk/">https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/representation/campaigns/welfare/letstalk/</a></li><li>• We've had great involvement from school reps and societies, with bespoke events going on in at the Law School and Medical School, and societies such as FreshAir, PhotoSoc, and Nightline getting involved.</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You should definitely come along to the events!!</li> <li>Of particular interest might be “The Development of the Student Mental Health Strategy”, in which students are invited to come and hear about the University’s approach to rising student mental health problems. Also ‘Speak Your Mind’ on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup>, which will see performances from students expressing their experiences of mental health, and displays of creations and comments from the week’s events.</li> <li>There will also be outreach on all campuses</li> </ul>
Next steps :	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More broadly, I hope to continue this mental health work into the rest of the semester. I hope to work with school reps and interested students to investigate what change(s) would positively impact students’ mental health in each school, and try to implement those changes.</li> </ul>

#### Sexual Health etc.

Summary	Many other universities and unions put on some kind of sexual health, or ‘SHAG’ week (sexual health and guidance) Members of Sexpression and Equal Opps Convenor Corne have expressed interest in organizing a similar event here at Edinburgh.
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A member of Advice Place staff and I have been helping them explore why this may be needed, and how it could work.</li> </ul>
Next steps :	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A motion will be coming to this council meeting on the topic.</li> </ul>

#### Mooncups!

Summary	Last year’s sabbatical team were successful in providing sanitary protection and pregnancy test free of charge through the Advice Place. Ever since starting the role, I’ve wanted to investigate promotion of more sustainable forms of sanitary protection
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contacted Mooncup and bought in bulk.</li> <li>The Mooncups are now available in Students’ Association shops for £11.45, compared to £19.99 in Boots etc. (RRP). Absolute bargain!</li> </ul>

Next steps :	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We'll be using Sustain.ED as an opportunity to promote mooncups as an alternative form of sanitary protection. I'll be writing a blog posts and holding a 'Your Mooncup Questions Answered' event (featuring yours truly).</li> </ul>
--------------	--

### Society Support

Summary	I'm VPSA, I love societies, I wanna support societies be great.
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Featured Society of the Week/Society Spotlight is off the ground!</li> <li>Have been collaborating with the team behind the Festival of Creative Learning and how, going forward, the Festival will be able to link up more with student groups and provide societies with opportunities to get projects off the ground.</li> <li>Piloting other forms of society structures, such as encouraging groups with overlapping remits to collaborate and form a larger group with more specific substructures.</li> <li>Working to solidify the remit of and promote the new Activities Rep roles. These will be up for election in March, and will represent each category of societies.</li> </ul>
Next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage students who are currently very involved in societies to run for an activities rep position (if you're interested, get in touch!).</li> </ul>

### Liberation Group Support

Summary	Equality falls under my remit, and as such I'm the main sabbatical touchpoint for the liberation reps (BME, Disability and Mental Wellbeing, Women's, LGBT+).
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have been working on the role description of the liberation rep roles, and the structures of the groups they represent to ensure that these roles are compatible with being a full time student whilst also having the opportunity to be as effective as possible.</li> </ul>
Next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to support the reps, and reach out to those who may wish to stand for a rep position in the upcoming elections.</li> </ul>

## Student Group Support

---

Summary	Provide support for the convenors of the Student Parents and Carers Group, the International Student Group, the Part Time and Mature Student Group, and the Postgraduate Student Group, in order that they can achieve their manifesto points
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Have been working with Patrick to properly understand the special circumstances policy, how it functions in each school and how best to go about enacting the policy passed at November student council re Student Parents &amp; Carers and extensions.</li><li>• Worked with Achintya to put on a Mental Health and Wellbeing Week event looking specifically at the challenges faced by international students.</li></ul>
Next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Work with Vivienne and Patrick to implement aforementioned policy.</li></ul>

### Other:

- Gluten free burger buns!!!
- 

## Report from Patrick Garratt, Vice President (Academic Affairs)

### Teaching Excellence Framework

Summary	University of Edinburgh not entering the Teaching Excellence Framework
Current stages:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• After months of discussions between the Students' Association, the University of Edinburgh is not entering the Teaching Excellence Framework!</li><li>• We worked closely with sabbatical officers from Scottish students' associations, NUS Scotland, and staff from the local University and College Union (UCU) branch to emphasise the benefits of using existing ways of measuring teaching quality, and not conceding to the reforms that the UK Government are imposing upon universities.</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuing to promote the Teaching Awards report, to show that the quality of teaching is not simply reflected through the jobs that graduates are employed in.</li> </ul>
Next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will be working with other Scottish students' associations and NUS Scotland, as well as continuing to promote the findings of the Teaching Awards, to promote the Scottish context for measuring teaching quality – which is about collaboration and not competition.</li> </ul>

#### Postgrad representation and Tutors and Demonstrators code

Summary	Work has been done on establishing remit for University-wide postgraduate taught and postgraduate research roles, involving consultation with postgrad tutors and staff who look after postgrads
Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will be consulting more postgraduate taught students, and will bring a motion to the next Student Council, so that positions will be ready for the October 2017 by-election.</li> </ul>

#### LiberatEd

Summary	Supporting student-led groups on liberating the curriculum
Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workshop for SPS and HCA students took place in December</li> <li>Policy being worked on, which will go to one of the Senate Committees in April, about ensuring new courses in College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences consider how scholars from under-represented and marginalised backgrounds should be included.</li> <li>Working with staff in Hispanic Studies department to explore redesigning first and second year curricula with help from students.</li> <li>Following students' association lobbying, staff members from University will now be gathering comprehensive research into the BME attainment gap, to be carried out by the University, which will later be used by the Students' Association own research staff.</li> </ul>
Next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I will spend the next few months supporting students, and students' association staff, establish links with staff members in individual Schools, so that changes can be made to curriculum on a School level. For example, we will be working with students in SPS and HCA to meet with course programme directors, and Heads of Undergraduate Teaching, and to present policy proposals on greater representation of marginalised voices in the curriculum, and on inclusive teaching.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting students in LLC on LiberatEd workshops.</li> <li>• Supporting Esme, BME Liberation Group Convener, on research into the BME attainment gap.</li> <li>• Events being prepared for February with 'Women in STEM' society on inclusive teaching and women in academia and industry relating to STEM subjects.</li> </ul>
--	---

### Supporting year abroad students

Summary	Supporting year abroad students
Update:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Established new working group with University staff about year abroad students, including those students who are in STEM disciplines and are on placement in industry.</li> <li>• Continuing to work with students and staff about embedding mental health awareness into second year curricula.</li> </ul>
Next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working Group should be complete over next few months, at which point the role of Year Abroad coordinators will be amended, so that coordinators aren't overworked, and so that students are given far greater support from other staff members on their year abroad.</li> </ul>

### Mandatory interruption of studies

Summary	Successfully lobbied against attempted changes by the University to allow staff to impose mandatory interruption of studies upon students
Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The University has been trying to reintroduce a policy it attempted to implement back in 2015, whereby as part of the 'Support for Study Policy', students who were <i>perceived</i> as posing a possible danger to themselves or others, could be given a mandatory interruption of study. The Students' Association strongly disagreed with this policy, because students who are causing harm to others would already be able to deal with through existing Code of Conduct policies. In our view, students have the right to be a nuisance, and a right to fail – provided they are not directly affecting others - and even if staff think they know best about to compel students to seek help, for example, about possible mental health issues, students should not be deprived of agency in the decision-making process. It is ultimately up to students to decide if they need time out from their</li> </ul>

	<p>studies. For this reason, the University has dropped its proposals, and we hope that future sabbatical officers will adopt a similar stance.</p>
--	---

### Mainstreaming Student-Led Individually Created Courses (SLICCs)

Summary	<p>SLICCs will now be rolled out across the University, allowing students to take 20 credit SLICC courses as part of first and second year semesters</p>
Update:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worked with SLICCs staff to get approval from University Senate committees, and from next year students will be able to take SLICCs during term time.</li> </ul>

### Conferences/National Outreach

Summary	<p>Conferences/national outreach</p>
Institution/location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attended workshop on BME attainment-gap at London School Economics Students' Union</li> <li>• Attended several NUS Scotland/students' association discussions on the TEF in December/January</li> <li>• Attended Working Group on student-engagement (QAA) in Glasgow</li> <li>• Lobbied MSPs at Holyrood with other sabbatical officers about greater funding for mental health support, bursaries for students, and for students accessing HE through articulation</li> </ul>

### **What else has been going on?**

- Ensuring that University's Learning Analytics policy is not used as a means of assessment of students, and not used by staff intrusively, preventing staff from using data about students' learning habits and behavior to make decisions about their welfare. We have helped ensure that the Learning Analytics policy soon to be formed will only be used as a means of *support* for students.
- Working with ECA students who recently had all their Semester 1 work destroyed by accident.
- Still running workshops with staff about the Teaching Awards.
- School Conveners forum still going strong!

- Working on a Board to ensure that *all* books on course reading lists are available in the Main Library: focusing largely on Humanities subjects where Schools do not provide all books through University resources.
- Helping to run focus groups with university staff on what students want in terms of digital education, such as coding, online learning resources etc.

## Report from Jenna Kelly, Vice President (Services)

### Renewable Energy and Low Carbon Options Review Group

<b>Summary</b>	Implementation of a university review group on renewables and low carbon
<b>Achievements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 student representative seats secured</li> <li>• The remit of the group includes:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Assess the prevalence and maturity of alternatives to fossil fuel energy generation, and carbon use management techniques, and rank their success.</li> <li>2. Develop a standard, practical methodology for the University to use when evaluating potential investments in renewable or other energy options</li> <li>3. Examine the business case for, and opportunities and risks associated with investment at scale in renewable energy, low carbon and carbon offsetting technologies</li> </ol> </li> </ul>
<b>Next steps</b>	To contribute proactively to the agenda of the group, briefing the student representative fully on ways in which to maximize the potential of student representation.

### Women in Homelessness

<b>Summary</b>	An initiative to educate our campus on the manners by which inequality spreads to homelessness, and to subsequently collect sanitary products for those most in need
<b>Achievements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnership secured with StreetWork, to distribute the sanitary products</li> <li>• Collaboration with University of Edinburgh accommodation, information services and estates departments</li> <li>• Many hundreds of sanitary products collected – filling 12 large bin liners! Massive thanks to everyone who donated.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration with TEDxUniversity of Edinburgh for Women in Homelessness talk</li> <li>• Attendance of approximately 60 at the Women in Homelessness talk</li> </ul>
<b>Next steps</b>	We recognize there was some concern regarding one of the organizations featured at the Women in Homelessness talk, and so have taken this on board, looking into more secure screening processes for similar events in the future.

### Modern Slavery Statement

<b>Summary</b>	Creation of a statement to illustrate the university's position on modern slavery
<b>Achievements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Position stands as zero tolerance to slavery and human trafficking in all forms</li> <li>• Areas considered included: premises, supply chains, whistle-blowing and donations</li> </ul>
<b>Next steps</b>	Support the awareness raising (e.g. event and social media campaign during Fairtrade Fortnight) Keep an eye on risk and mitigation as part of the monitoring and evaluation process

### SustainED

<b>Summary</b>	Edinburgh's first city-wide green festival, 16 <sup>th</sup> – 18 <sup>th</sup> February, in partnership with The University of Edinburgh and Edinburgh City Council
<b>Achievements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal staff steering group, student fashion show team of 15</li> <li>• Partnerships secured, funding secured</li> <li>• 30 events</li> <li>• ~20 societies engaged</li> <li>• ~10 external organizations engaged</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebration of sustainable wins in the past year</li> <li>• Paper-free marketing strategy adopted</li> <li>• Event disciplines ranging from the arts, to STEM, to business.</li> <li>• Event types spanning educational talks, interactive workshops, performances and fairs</li> </ul>
<b>Next steps</b>	<p>Execute the festival with the involved staff and student teams</p> <p>Use evaluation methods to create an impact report, presented to the partnership board.</p> <p>Use evaluation to assess the future of the festival, as an annual event in the calendar year</p>

### Farmers Market

<b>Summary</b>	Agreement confirmed to host a regular Farmers Market on campus
<b>Achievements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnership made with Stockbridge Markets</li> <li>• Most likely a monthly feature</li> <li>• Within a Students Association space</li> </ul>
<b>Next steps</b>	<p>Pilot the market during SustainED</p> <p>Promote the market effectively to facilitate maximum benefit for students and our community</p>

### Minimum Card Spend removed

<b>Summary</b>	Removal of £3 minimum card spend in all Students Association outlets
<b>Achievements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No more minimum card spend on any Students Association outlet card payments</li> </ul>

<b>Next steps</b>	To not bring it back To explore options of a similar achievement within university outlets
-------------------	---

### Scottish Student Housing Summit

<b>Summary</b>	NUS event to address student housing issues, 25 <sup>th</sup> February.
<b>Achievements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration with NUS and other Scottish universities including Stirling</li> <li>• Breakout sessions identified on guarantor schemes, rent controls and cooperatives.</li> </ul>
<b>Next steps</b>	Bring outcomes of the event back to Edinburgh after the summit, to implement To use the housing outreach in February, and accommodation fair to gather interest and collate contributions to the topic of conversation

## Report from Alec Edgecliffe-Johnson, EUSA President

### Summary

What follows are a few of what I consider the most important developments out of all that have been achieved during the past month. Please feel free to get in touch with me if you would like to hear more developments/achievements and/or hear how the ones described here fit into the wider strategy.

### Transportation Update

<b>Summary</b>	<b>An update on various strands of work on transportation</b>
<b>Achievements</b>	<p>Following a presentation to University Court (Board) based on the consultation of a number of students, the University is now taking the transportation issue very seriously. A strategy is being designed to address a number of issues from students around the campus with different needs.</p> <p>Although the significantly cheaper 9 Month Bus Pass addresses the needs of thousands of students traveling on Lothian Buses every day, it does not go far enough. Workshops and consultations are being held to address the Kings Shuttle Bus, the now-defunct NHS shuttle bus and multiple other transport issues.</p>

Next steps:	A series of student workshops and consultations will be held in order to draft a strategy that works to address the issues. Pilot programs and a strategy are the expected outcome. I will report back with progress in the student councils that follow.
-------------	---

### Development and Alumni/Mentoring Program

Summary	<b>Various strands of work done around increasing the engagement of students with alumni</b>
Achievements	<p>A plan is being designed to tap into the network of hundreds of thousands of alumni around the world. They could support students as they think about applying, as they look for and join jobs, as they transition to life after Uni in foreign cities etc.</p> <p>Furthermore, a mentoring application is being designed to facilitate mentoring relationships between students and alumni during their time at Edinburgh.</p>
Next steps :	Preliminary steps include linking cultural societies, the international office and the D&A department in order to begin fostering relationships. The mentoring program is holding consultations and steering group board meetings are ongoing. Launch date or timeline is still being decided.

### Voter Registration

Summary	<b>Working to ensure greater visibility of voter registration for students</b>
Achievements	<p>Following the motion at council I worked with Student Systems and agreed the following three elements for greater visibility/knowledge of voter registration through the Students' Associations' online portal:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. At registration at the outset of their university experience students will be prompted to register to vote</li> <li>2. There will be a visible link on MyEd to our voter registration page. Hopefully that will be in place by the upcoming council election</li> <li>3. In the all student newsletter around key elections there will be a link to our page. That includes the upcoming council election.</li> </ol>
Next steps :	Follow up with University colleagues to ensure that these changes are delivered and reassess next year to assess the success of the various methods

## Principal Recruitment

---

Summary	<b>One of the nine members on the recruitment panel for the new Principal</b>
Achievements	This has been a lengthy procedure and at each stage the Students' Association has had direct input. It's incredibly important that we have had this input as this person will be setting the strategic direction of the university for a number of years and needs to have student interests in mind.
Next Steps	Liaise with the new Principal and ensure a smooth transition in her/his role as well as in the relationship to the Students' Association.

## Council Elections

---

Summary	<b>We are beginning to plan our approach and desired outcomes (policy not people) for the upcoming council elections</b>
Achievements	Over the next few months we will be working with a range of organisations and students, both at our university and elsewhere to formulate a strategy for the upcoming elections. We will be aligning with NUS and other Student Unions in Edinburgh to ensure that we are all moving in the same direction and using our influence to the greatest effect.
Next Steps	Continue to plan the approach and bring in additional, relevant stakeholders. Eventually we will advertise the elections to students in order to drive participation. I will continue to update as this progresses.

## Discretionary Fund

---

Summary	<b>The discretionary fund is now being heavily advertised. Eligible students are encouraged to apply especially for items that might incur financial strain in the next few months including grad gowns</b>
Achievements	<p>Historically the discretionary fund has not been as well advertised as it could be and as a result students with financial need have not always been aware. We have pushed this year to ensure that students are made aware of the fund.</p> <p>One of the primary uses of the fund, we expect, will be to cover the cost of the grad gowns. We hope that if students begin to apply to the fund for this purpose that a separate fund is created/a clear sign is sent to the university that students who experience financial hardship should not have to endure this additional financial burden.</p>

---

Next Steps	Continue to spread the word about the fund to those students who may be eligible and to follow up to create a plan of action if a large number of applicants are applying for grad gowns.
------------	---

---

### Changes to the Digital Experience

---

Summary	<b>A summary of the number of different items that will be changing in the next year/years as a result of Student Association input</b>
Achievements	Timetabling on the phone is the latest of a number of upgrades in the student digital experience. Alongside online recorded lectures, the Student Association App, an upcoming revamp of MyEd and a potential Talks at Edinburgh (working on this one currently) this represents a fundamental change in the way that students will interact with the University.

---