Accountability

PAPER A

Report from Jonny Ross-Tatam, EUSA President

Summary

Lots of work done, on investments in student spaces, student mental health and wellbeing and protecting bursary support for low income students. But still lots more work to do with the upcoming democracy referendum, investment in the counselling service and further expanding bursary support.

Protecting Bursaries for low income students

<table>
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<th>Summary</th>
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<tr>
<td>Protecting Bursaries for low income students</td>
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<tr>
<th>Achievements</th>
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<tr>
<td>Bursaries have been protected for low income students for the foreseeable. Despite pressure on them amid public funding cuts, we made it crystal clear we would not accept any reduction in them. Delighted to say that this has happened.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Issues:</th>
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<tr>
<td>The bursary support still isn’t enough for those from households of between £20-30k. I stood on a platform of ‘expanding bursaries’, so I will make this a top priority for the coming year. We are also showing with evidence that students from low income backgrounds are less likely to be society committee members than those from wealthier backgrounds.</td>
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Investment in Student spaces

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<th>Summary</th>
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<td>Investment in Student spaces</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Achievements</th>
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<tr>
<td>- <strong>Over 400 more study spaces in the Main Library</strong> for the next year.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- <strong>£0.5 million investment in Kings Buildings House</strong> for better food and social space.</td>
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<td>- <strong>£100k in the Wee Red Bar.</strong></td>
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<td>- <strong>£1.5 million investment in teaching space.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- <strong>£1million investment in schools (particularly KB) to upgrade social space.</strong></td>
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<th>Issues:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Need to make the Teviot extension, new investments in the Student Centre and the Pleasance Re-development work for students.</td>
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### Supporting student mental health and wellbeing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary</th>
<th><strong>Supporting student mental health and wellbeing</strong></th>
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</table>
| Achievements | - **£10k Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund**, which has funded a variety of projects from mental health awareness, to mindfulness courses, to an expansion of Nightline’s digital service.  
- **Mental Health and Wellbeing Awareness Week**. Over 30 events from EUSA, societies, Counselling Service, the Sports Union and other groups. #Let'sTalk campaign. Andy and I are pleased with how it went and look forward to continuing work on it next year.  
- **Mental health issues to be part of Peer Support Leaders training**. Peer Support has between 500-600 leaders and impacts over 7000 students. Mental health issues, listening, looking out for friends and signposting to appropriate support is a part of training.  
- **Mandatory mental health first aid training for personal tutors has become a top priority for University management**. The Senior Vice-Principal Teaching and Learning and the Assistant Principal Academic Support have made a commitment to working towards this. |
| Issues: | We also need to secure extra investment in the University Counselling Service to provide support for those who need it. |

### Increase investment in the University Counselling Service

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary</th>
<th><strong>Increase investment in the University Counselling Service</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Achievements</td>
<td>There is a commitment for the University to invest in new Counselling space at Moray House for both staff and students. We are pushing for more investment to ensure that this space is properly staffed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issues:</td>
<td>We are currently in University Planning Round negotiations (when the budgets for the year get decided) at the moment, which continues until June. So will know whether we have succeeded by the end of the Year.</td>
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### Getting Lectures Recorded Online

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<tr>
<th>Summary</th>
<th><strong>Getting Lectures Recorded Online</strong></th>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Achievements</th>
<th>A bid has been made in the upcoming Planning Round and is supported by the Senior Vice Principal for Teaching and Learning.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Issues:</td>
<td>We are currently amidst negotiations for the Planning Round, which go on until June.</td>
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**Cheaper Transport for Vet and Medic students**

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<tr>
<th>Summary</th>
<th><em>Cheaper Transport for Vet and Medic students</em></th>
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<tr>
<td>Achievements</td>
<td>Made sure the voices of Vet and Medic school students have been heard in the University's new Transport Strategy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issues:</td>
<td>Awaiting the results of the University's Transport Strategy. It is taking longer than expected…</td>
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**Upcoming Democracy Referendum**

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<tr>
<th>Summary</th>
<th><em>Upcoming Democracy Referendum</em></th>
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</table>
| Achievements | Consulted with over 5,000 students in two surveys. Came forward with a proposal to make our student union more representative and relevant for all students.  
  Proposals include online voting for contentious issues, a new full-time Vice-President Welfare and part-time paid liberation reps. |
| Issues: | At the beginning of a Referendum voting period. Need support of over 2000 to pass. So get voting! |

**Supporting social enterprises**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary</th>
<th><em>Supporting student social enterprises and getting the University to make social impact investments</em></th>
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Achievements

Secured funding for a social enterprise intern to do consultation and make proposals.

Holding a student social enterprise showcase event for the University, in a way of securing support for these groups in the future.

Issues:

This work is ongoing.

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**Report from Urte Macikene, Vice-President, Services**

**Summary**

Areas of focus for me this month have been ethical investment, affordable housing, asylum seeker support, estates developments at KB House and Central Area, all of which have seen some really substantial progress. I have also been dealing with a lot of long-term planning for EUSA, including our budget for next year, implementation of the new minimum wage, and of course the culmination of the democracy view in referendum proposals.

**Democracy**

**Summary**

Referendum/democracy review/elections

**Achievements**

- As a team the exec have spent a huge amount of time collating, consulting on, and distilling the results of the democracy review into a set of proposals to go to referendum. The calling notice with questions is available here: [https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/pageassets/representation/elections/elections2016/Referendum-Calling-Notice-Feb-2016.pdf](https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/pageassets/representation/elections/elections2016/Referendum-Calling-Notice-Feb-2016.pdf)

- By the time of student council, voting in the referendum will be open, and will close at the end of the EUSA election campaign period on 10 March. Nominations for EUSA elections are now open and myself and the other sabbs have been doing lecture shoutouts and outreach talking about what we have done this year and encouraging people to run. There is still one day left to nominate yourself online, you can do it here: [www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/elections](http://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/elections)

**Next steps:**

- There is still one day left to nominate yourself online, you can do it here: [www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/elections](http://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/elections) Doing this job has been incredibly rewarding and an absolutely unique learning experience. You’re missing out if you don’t run!

- We will be doing lots of student outreach and campaigning over the course of the elections.
## Prevent Legislation

### Summary

### Achievements

EUSA has released two statements which give a more comprehensive update on our actions to date on combating the Prevent legislation which I will not copy here as they are quite lengthy:

- **Statement 1 (Feb 02):** [https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/news/article/EUSA/An-Update-on-Prevent/](https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/news/article/EUSA/An-Update-on-Prevent/)

### Next steps:

- We are awaiting legal advice which would investigate more thoroughly the detail of our space agreements with the university. This legal advice would determine to the furthest possible extent whether there is any possibility to exempt EUSA premises from the Prevent statutory requirement relating to premises and room bookings. It will take several weeks to receive this legal advice, and we will share it with students and determine a further course of action as soon as we receive it.

- We are liaising with societies who have been affected by the new room bookings procedure, and will be using examples of its detrimental effect to continue lobbying the university to simplify the room bookings procedure, and to publicly oppose the policy. We are also continuing to meet with the BME Convener to consult the group on continuing actions.

- Following concerns raised by students, we are committed to ensuring any further action taken or information we receive is clearly and publicly communicated.

## Ethical Investment

### Summary

An updated ethical investment policy statement was released by the university, which can be seen here:


### Achievements

- The university has moved all of its direct investments (anything that is not in pooled investments or property trusts) to a different type of fund which includes further-reaching screens on armaments, amongst other things. This fund excludes investment in any companies which take in over 20% of their turnover from anything that could be considered arms, so this will effectively have to mean divestment from companies like Rolls Royce, which reportedly makes 26% turnover from arms.
- A review of current investments in regional and global mutual funds with a view to ensuring they align with our ethical investment policies, including consideration of moving to different funds
- A commitment to pursuing opportunities in social impact investing (something I'm happy to chat to people more about as the statement is quite vague but I think there is potential for this to go somewhere quite positive)
- Provisionally secured student representation to the University Investment Committee, which is something EUSA has been asking for for years and would be key to maintaining continued student pressure and oversight of university investments.

Next steps

The campaign for full divestment and ethical reinvestment continues, and I fully support People and Planet’s call for divestment from all fossil fuels and divestment from all companies with over 5% turnover from arms. See my blog post here for further thoughts: https://eusavps2015.wordpress.com/2016/02/19/whats-up-with-ethical-investment/

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### Asylum seeker fees and scholarships

**Summary**

**Achievements**

- The university has announced a package of support and new scholarships for asylum seekers, including five fully funded undergraduate scholarships and one full Master’s scholarship for asylum seekers, three full fees and living costs Masters scholarships for refugees from Syria, and £100,000 for further assistance for asylum seekers and refugees. I’ve been doing lots of lobbying on this and campaigning with the Equal Access Edinburgh campaign and am so pleased to see results.
- They've also finally officially confirmed that they will exempt asylum seekers from international fees!
- The University has also said in a press release that they will "approach the Scottish Government to suggest that a solution be found that improves access to Higher Education for asylum seekers across all institutions in Scotland," a massive boost to student union lobbying on asylum seeker access to SAAS funding (see my blog post here: https://eusavps2015.wordpress.com/…/open-letter-to-scottis…/)

**Next steps**

Access to student support funding for asylum seekers is one of our five areas of focus ahead of the Scottish Elections. I will be talking about this issue in meetings with candidates, asking questions of candidates at debates, and continuing to liaise with Equal Access and NUS Scotland on their campaigns.
### KB House Refurbishment

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<tr>
<td>Achievements</td>
<td>The work on the KBH refurb has been continuing at a fast pace. We commissioned an external agency to come up with five different food concepts for us to trial, each with sample menu items, price ranges, and an idea of the overall aesthetic. As most TC Conveners will know, we will be doing student consultation outreach stall on food, study space, and services at KBH on Feb 23rd-26th. This consultation has been developed in collaboration with Arduin, Giulio, and Adam. I have emailed all KB-based school reps inviting them to sign up to help out on the stall, and we are also inviting class reps. We have arranged food samples and variety of other ways for students to engage on the stalls. There will be online and in-person surveys.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Next steps:</td>
<td>Responses from the consultation will help make decisions about what food outlets and space improvements to move ahead with. Contractors will be appointed and work started immediately at the end of the term.</td>
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### Central Area Redevelopment

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<tr>
<td>Achievements</td>
<td>Page/Park have been officially appointed as the design team to carry through the Central Area redevelopment to its final business case stage. We have now had an initial client meeting with them to set our priorities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Next steps:</td>
<td>We will now be meeting with the design team every two weeks to continue feeding back on designs and ensuring that the new spaces fulfil our commercial and student support needs, provide vibrant, flexible, and innovative spaces, and preserve the historic character of Teviot. I will be assisting the design team with further student focus groups and ‘pop-up’ consultations with students around campus during the spring. I will also be going on some site visits of buildings with designs similar to what they are proposing to develop thoughts and options on which designs could work for EUSA.</td>
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### Affordable Housing – Cut the Rent Campaign

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**Achievements**

I have launched and am continuing to lead the Edinburgh Uni Cut the Rent campaign. The Facebook page can be found here: https://www.facebook.com/EdUniCuttheRent/

The campaign is calling for:
- The costs of university halls for a standard academic year not to exceed 80% of the baseline SAAS loan of £4,750
- The University of Edinburgh to adopt a definition of ‘affordable’ housing in line with city definitions and commit to a proportion of accommodation being affordable
- Private purpose-build student halls (Unite, Student Housing Company, etc) to be included in city-wide regulation for 25% of all new builds to be affordable housing

We have organised several actions so far, including a successful stall at the accommodation fair.

**Next steps:**

This campaign is part of a wider package of work leading up to the new University Residential Strategy to be released in spring and EUSA’s input into it. We have secured university approval to distribute a student housing survey through official channels which will help us compile data on student expectations and experiences of housing. This survey will launch at the end of the month. I have also been researching affordable housing and current price levels compared between university halls, private student housing, and private lets. All of this research and survey will be pulled together into a report to submit to the residential strategy.

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**Main Library Study Spaces**

**Summary**

**Main Library Study Spaces**

**Achievements**

As a result of an Estates investment in the student experience we helped negotiate, there will be over 400 new study spaces in the main library over the next year. Approx. 100 will be released over the summer, and a further 300-400 in the lower ground floor in autumn/winter 2016.

I have helped organize a student consultation to get student input into what kind of study space should be created here. I have also looked at the designs myself and fed in my ideas for more flexible, accessible space, and the need for group work space.

**Next steps:**

The consultation will be running next week in the library, and I will be continuing to oversee plans as they go ahead.

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**Other**

**Summary**

Other stuff that isn’t an ‘issue’ but has been taking up my time
Details

- We have been planning for the implementation of the new minimum wage in April 2016 with the Trustee Board – this will have some significant financial consequences.

- Negotiating EUSA’s budget for next year within our departments and with the university.

- Consultation on new appointments to replace the Commercial Director has finished and we are reviewing findings and hope to advertise new roles in March.

- I have attended protest actions by the Living Rent Campaign and People and Planet and supporting medics in solidarity with the Junior Doctor Strike.

- I met with Tommy Sheppard, MP for Edinburgh East, and raised a number of key issues to students, including asylum seeker funding, post study work visa, and the Prevent legislation.

- Planning for Scottish Elections is continuing and we have secured participants for two debates and are scheduling lobbying meetings with individual candidates. We did lots of stalls encouraging students to register to vote in National Voter Registration Week.

- Plus lots of other bits and bobs including organising SRS Forum on Fair Trade, meeting with potential EUSA candidates, starting to plan for the sabb handover, etc!

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Report from Andy Peel, Vice President (Societies & Activities)

**EUSA Referendum**

**Summary**

Voting opened today for EUSA’s democracy and leadership referendum. This is the culmination of 6 months of hard work by the sabbatical team; surveying thousands of students, holding over 40 focus groups and hours and hours of refining proposals. Online voting for contentious decisions, an extra sabbatical officer to focus explicitly on welfare and many more proposals have been put forward and the decision is now in student’s hands.

**Achievements**

**Issues:**
### Mental Health and Wellbeing Week

**Summary**
EUSA’s Mental Health and Wellbeing Week was co-hosted with the University and Sports Union.

**Achievements**
It was really well received and I genuinely thinking we are reaching a turning point with student mental health. Lots of University staff approached me during and after the week asking how to get involved and there is a real appetite to keep this momentum moving forward. In March there is a Thematic Review of Mental Health Services, for which I am an internal member of the review panel. This is an opportunity to highlight areas of weakness and to provide a more coherent approach to mental health service provision.

**Issues:**

### Gender Neutral Toilets

**Summary**
Fulfilment of ‘EUSA Stop Taking the Piss’ motion passed in December 2015 and ambition to increase provision of gender neutral toilets in University buildings.

**Achievements**
I’ve met both with the Director of University Estates and Head of Space Management to discuss gender-neutral toilets within the University as I continue to push for a formal gender-neutral toilet policy within new builds. The Head of Estates assures me that he is ‘fairly confident’ that the University will be an increased provision but there is still a number of University staff to win over. I have been working with the Head of Space Management to have GN toilets brought up in the creatively named ‘Space Enhancement Management Group and I am working extremely hard to ensure that University staff know and understand why this is important to students and will continue to lobby to ensure that all students feel safe on campus at all times. The Head of Space Management is currently introducing GN toilets into a guide of best practice for University Directors of Estates across the country.

**Issues:**
1) There is still some opposition to this within the University Estates Department
2) Our licensing may be affected by the motion passed in December
3) Our buildings capacity will be affected by the motion passed in December, if introduced in its current form.
4) We are working with our solicitors and waiting to be given specific building capacities. Any decision taken is likely to have to be taken by the Trustee Board.

### Personal Tutors

**Summary**
Ambition to provide Level One mental health training for Personal Tutors
Achievements | I believe we have now reached a position where there will be a 'minimum expectation' that the PTs will undertake level one mental health first aid training. Regardless of difficulties with timelines, this is a huge step forward; Jonny and I will continue to lobby the University to make sure this aspiration becomes a reality.

Issues: | 1) The timeline of 12 months is ambitious  
2) The buy in of all staff is at a tipping point so continued lobbying is required.

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**Anti-Sexual Harassment Campaign**

**Summary** | Anti-sexual harassment campaign being launched by the University, EUSA and the Sports Union

**Achievements** | The campaign brief has been written and sent off to the creative folk who we are working with. I’m very pleased that EUSA is having such critical input into such an important collaborative campaign.

**Issues:** | 1) There are still discussions over whether this will launch in April or September

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**Prevent Legislation**

**Summary** | We continue to believe, as we always have, that the Prevent policy is harmful to students, an undue intrusion on their right to expression and dissent, and encourages Islamophobic and xenophobic profiling.

**Achievements** | We have been in ongoing discussions with the University regarding our opposition to the Prevent policy since November 2015. Shortly following an initial meeting, we determined that we would not be sending any EUSA staff on trainings for implementing the policy. In December, we also refused an invitation to sit on the University Compliance Group for Prevent. We would like to reiterate that as mandated in the Student Council policy (“Preventing Prevent”) passed in October 2015, we have lobbied the University to be transparent on how the policy is operating and trainings which are being delivered to staff and we have also ensured that information on combating potential Islamophobic effects of the policy is also placed here. We are giving a briefing to EUSA Administration staff on the risks associated with Prevent and have ensured the University had consulted the Islamic Society and the Chaplaincy, two of the groups most likely to be affected by the Act. Additionally, we have met with the campus joint unions and other student unions to make our position clear. EUSA will be continuing to oppose Prevent and will be voicing our objections in the loudest possible terms.

**Issues:** | 1) The Prevent legislation
**Report from Imogen Wilson, Vice President (Academic Affairs)**

### Referendum

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<tr>
<th>Summary</th>
<th>Our Referendum</th>
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<tr>
<td>Achievements</td>
<td>Working on our democratic review has been our main team project this year. We have spent so long putting everything together, and consulted with over 5000 students to work out how we can make EUSA more relevant and more accessible. You can see the proposed changes here: <a href="https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/pageassets/representation/elections/elections2016/Referendum-Calling-Notice-Feb-2016.pdf">https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/pageassets/representation/elections/elections2016/Referendum-Calling-Notice-Feb-2016.pdf</a> The two main questions are:</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Should your students union change the way it represents all students at the University of Edinburgh (this question outlines changes to how student council works, paid college and liberation reps, and an extra sabbatical officer and changes to the existing roles,</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Should EUSA (Edinburgh University Students’ Association) change its name to University of Edinburgh Students’ Union?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Issues:</td>
<td>We will need 2000 yes votes for this to pass, and campaigning on this scale is never easy. If you would like to get involved in our campaign when it begins then please contact one of the four of us.</td>
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### Special Circumstances Review

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<tr>
<th>Summary</th>
<th>Special Circumstances Review – changes to the special circumstances process and also coursework extension regulations</th>
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| Achievements | • From September there will be a university wide extension policy - some schools at the moment still do not allow extensions for coursework, and now every student will be able to ask for an extension for up to seven days. 
• The rules on documentary evidence for special circumstances are hopefully being relaxed (can’t confirm that just yet) to allow testimonies from flat mates/family etc, rather than just relying on notes from GPs. Mental health on the process is being more explicitly recognized |
| Issues: | No issues – Nailing this one. |
### Liberating the Curriculum

**Summary**

Liberating the curriculum

**Achievements**

- Designed a section for the induction of new tutors that is about equality and diversity/inclusive teaching. It includes guidance on how to challenge inappropriate behavior, how to make sure everyone has a chance to speak and how to talk about sensitive issues. I’m taking it to learning and teaching committee with the hope of rolling it out to all schools in September.

**Issues:**

Still have to win over all the schools that liberation is a crucial issue in our education

### Genderjam

**Summary**

A half day conference exploring gender inequality in HE.

**Achievements**

- Hosted GenderJam – It was on Thursday 18 February during Innovative Learning Week. There were four workshops on Athena Swan, lad culture, networking and There was a really good turn out of about 80 people, many of whom had not attended EUSA events before, and lots of PhD students at the university coming along for research.
- It was really successful in raising awareness. The panel discussion on liberation in the curriculum inspired some really good questions from the audience, and contributions on the panel were from Sorana Vieru (NUS), Dr Carole Jones (LLC), Maia Almeida Amir (EUSA Women’s liberation group convenor) and Charlie Chorely (Cambridge University Students Union)

**Issues:**

Working out practical steps forward from the conference is difficult, as it was mainly geared around identifying problems

### Lectures online

**Summary**

Lectures online – Rolling out ‘lecture capture’ across all schools so big lectures are recorded and uploaded to Learn or equivalent after class to be used as revision.

**Achievements**

At the start of the year we were told this was absolutely not possible, and not a priority for the university. Now, information services have applied for funding from the university in this year’s planning round to do a ‘scoping exercise’ to work out exactly how much it will cost/how long it will take/which company to use etc, hopefully for implementation by September 2017. I’m hoping to speed up this process as much as possible, and will have more concrete news in a few weeks.
Issues:

- I don’t have a commitment yet from the university that they will fix the systems already in place – CaptureEd which is available in the Law School and School of Social and Political Science is failing, and may not last the time until a new system comes in.
- Alex Munyard was VPAA two years ago and was fighting for this back then - it takes a long time to change things in the university and I’m conscious that until things are finalized it’s too early to celebrate.

Post-Study Work Visa

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<th>Summary</th>
<th>Post-Study Work Visa</th>
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<tr>
<td>Achievements</td>
<td>No achievements yet… But after our elections I’ll be launching a campaign on this, including video testimonies of students who won’t be able to stay in the UK. I’ll be storing them all on my blog as well as collecting signatures online and on paper (come and sign the form after the meeting!) and eventually make it one big electronic document. Now is the time to start working on it as a new report from the Scottish Affairs Committee came out last week clearly showing the need and demand for the PSWV in Scotland - so watch this space.</td>
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Issues: Theresa May